

American Parties' Policies towards Europe in the Post-Cold War Era

A Comparative Analysis of the Democratic and Republican Party Platforms

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Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract

This thesis provides a unique perspective on transatlantic relations in the post-Cold War era: the role of the parties. Democratic and Republican party platforms from the 1992 American presidential elections until the 2016 elections are analyzed to reveal differences in their policies towards Europe. The 14 party platforms were chosen as the material because they are the most important documents the political parties produce. Moreover, there is only limited amount of previous research on party platforms since the focus has been on the actions of the administration or on the candidate speeches and debates instead.

The analysis is carried out on two levels: comparison over time to reveal intra-party ideological change, and comparison between the parties to reveal inter-party polarization over policies towards Europe. The method of the thesis is mainly data-driven qualitative content analysis. The theoretical background is based on research about party polarization and partisan ideological differences over foreign policy.

The analysis shows that the policies towards Europe vary within the party platforms over time. Intra-party ideological policy shifts appear more clearly in the Republican party platforms, whereas the Democratic party platforms showcase a more balanced ideological foundation. The incumbent/challenger role of the party as well as events in international politics have also influenced policy shifts over time. Additionally, the analysis reveals that Democratic and Republican party platforms are somewhat polarized in their policies towards Europe. As predicted, the parties concentrate on slightly different policies, regions, and institutions when referring to Europe. Most importantly, because of their ideological differences, the two parties have differing or even opposing moral evaluations about and treatment recommendations for the policies and the actors.

To conclude, this thesis provides new information about the partisan perspective on transatlantic relations. Some say the party platforms are neglected documents that receive little public attention. Their policies will rarely be realized as such in the real world because of the balance of power in the American political system and unexpected events in international politics. Nonetheless, this thesis proves that intra-party ideological contestation and inter-party polarization exist in transatlantic relations.

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1 Introduction

Every four years, the presidential elections of the United States attract attention from all around the world. In 2020, the time of the elections has come again. Depending on the results of the American elections, the foreign policy strategies of one of the world's most powerful nations may change course. Among other key issues, the outcome of the elections has an impact on transatlantic relations. In order to better understand the current state and future of the transatlantic relations, one can look back in history.

In the 20th century, transatlantic relations were characterized by two World Wars and an enduring Cold War rivalry. The end of the Cold War marked an end to the bipolar world order and thus a start for increasing polarization of the foreign policy views between the American parties (Mead, 2001). Over time, plenty of research has been conducted on the evolving transatlantic relations in the post-Cold War era.¹ However, previous studies on transatlantic relations have failed to take partisan aspects into account. In this thesis, the focus is not on the role of the administration but on the role of the party machines.

This paper aims to reveal the differences between the party platforms of the United States' Democrats and Republicans with regards to what kind of image they construct of Europe. The time frame is the post-Cold War era, starting from the 1992 presidential elections and ending at the 2016 elections. All 14 party platforms from seven presidential elections were chosen as the data of this study because they are the most important documents that the political parties produce.

For a long time the focus of elections research has remained on the candidate level. Candidate speeches and TV-debates have acquired national and academic attention, while the party platforms have been cast the role of the wallflower. There is only a limited amount of research about the contents of the party platforms, and no previous

¹ Including Duffield, 2001; Peterson and Pollack (eds.), 2003; Steffenson, 2005; Forsberg and Herd, 2006; Toje, 2008; Baker, 2009; Kupchan and Trubowitz, 2010; Smith, 2011; Cohen, 2013; Sestanovich, 2014; and Haass, 2017.

research about the way Europe is addressed in them. Therefore, the chosen time frame and data provide a topical and unique perspective into transatlantic relations.

On one hand, it is interesting to compare the party platforms of the respective parties from the perspective of time to find out if any ideological change can be detected within a party. On the other hand, a comparison between the two parties is relevant because it reveals the ideological differences between them. Thus, the main research questions of the thesis are:

1. *How and why do the Democrats' and the Republicans' policies towards Europe change over time?*
2. *How and why do the policies towards Europe differ between the Democrats and the Republicans?*

The hypothesis of the thesis is that both intraparty and interparty ideological change can be discovered in the party platforms through analyzing them. First, it is to be expected that the developments of domestic and international politics will affect the policies and ideological tones of the respective parties over time. Second, it is assumed that the parties will concentrate on slightly different issues, events, and actors when referring to Europe. The Democratic party is more likely to highlight soft policy issues like social policy and climate change, whereas the Republican party may focus more on hard policy like defense and military actions. Third, should the party platforms raise virtually similar issues, events, and actors, it is anticipated that because of their ideological differences, the two parties should have differing or even opposing moral evaluations of and treatment recommendations for them.

The method used in the thesis is qualitative content analysis, QCA (Schreier, 2012). Following the tradition of QCA, the results of the analysis are presented in both qualitative and quantitative ways. Though the analysis is mainly data-driven, the party platforms will be analyzed in light of the theoretical framework as well. The theoretical background of the thesis is based on Peter Hayes Gries' (2014) study on conservatives' and liberals' interparty and intraparty ideological differences over foreign policy. Gries has identified two foreign policy profiles among the Republicans, and three foreign policy profiles among the Democrats. In this master's thesis, the aim is to recognize these distinct ideological foreign policy profiles in the party platforms.

The master's thesis is structured as follows: The second chapter consists of three parts: research about party polarization, introduction of traditional American schools of foreign policy, and a theoretical framework of partisan ideological differences over foreign policy. The third chapter investigates the data that will be analyzed, the party platforms. Previous research about party platforms is presented, and the process of the platform writing is explained. The fourth chapter presents the nature and steps of the qualitative content analysis method. In the fifth chapter, qualitative content analysis is used to reveal the differences between the party platforms with regards to what kind of image they construct of Europe. After that, the research results will be discussed in the sixth chapter. Finally, conclusions about the results are drawn in the seventh chapter.

For the purpose of this paper, Europe means everything that is located within the geographical borders of the continent. In addition, international institutions with most member states coming from Europe, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization NATO and the Group of Seven G-7, are included in the analysis.

2 Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the theoretical background of this thesis is laid out. The first section is about general party polarization in American politics in the post-Cold War era. The second section shifts the focus to foreign policy. Traditional schools of American foreign policy are presented. Finally, the third section displays ideological differences over foreign policy both between and within Democratic and Republican parties.

2.1 Party Polarization in American Politics

The theoretical background of the thesis is related to the two research questions. First, previous research is used to provide some structure for the analysis of the first research question: *How do the Democrats' and the Republicans' images of Europe change over time?* This is because the dominant ideology within a party can change over time, due to internal power struggles or external incidents or other events. Second, previous research is used to explain the differences between the parties' images of Europe, to answer the “why” in the second research question: *How and why do the images of Europe differ between the Democrats and the Republicans?*

The collapse of the Soviet Union put an end to the dominant Cold War consensus in the American foreign policy (Mead, 2001). The bottom line of the foreign policy had been the same for both Democrats and Republicans from the 1940s to the 1980s: fight against communism on all fronts. Since the immediate threat to the safety of Americans was gone with the Soviet Union, American politicians could finally openly ask why the United States should expose itself to the costs and risks of interventions overseas (Entman 2004, 95-96). It is worth investigating whether this fundamental shift in American foreign policy has impacted transatlantic relations as well.

2.1.1 General Causes for Party Polarization

Kupchan and Trubowitz (2007) and Frymer (2011) are among many scholars who argue that party polarization has increased and the number of moderates in the Congress has

declined since the 1970s. At the same time, the parties have become more ideologically homogenous. The Democratic party has drifted more towards liberalism and dovish foreign policy, whereas the Republican party has become more conservative and hawkish in foreign policy. Jeong and Quirk (2019) have investigated the intra-party differences in the Congress in more detail. They argue that in the Republican party, the most conservative and hawkish, so-called “Gingrich Republicans”, have taken over the seats from more moderate Republicans. In the ranks of the Democrats the number of the conservative “Southern Democrats” has declined. As a result, the Democratic party has drifted ideologically towards liberalism.

Scholars present many causes that have fueled the general trend of party polarization between Democrats and Republicans in the US. Kupchan and Trubowitz (2007) argue that the parties have drifted further apart from each other in the regional perspective. The coastlines and Northeast with their big cities and multi-ethnic population have become mainly liberal and Democratic. On the other hand, the South, the Mountain West, as well as increasingly the Mid-West with its rural areas, declining industry towns, and white population have become conservative and Republican.

Kupchan and Trubowitz (2007) and Frymer (2011) point out four institutional causes for this regional gap. First, the scholars claim that partisan gerrymandering has led to more homogenous constituencies and safe seats for one party in the elections. This means that the more moderate candidates no longer succeed in the elections because there is no incentive to try to apply to a “median voter”. Second, Frymer (2011) argues that polarization has increased because closed primaries are becoming more common. It means that only registered members of a party can choose their party’s candidate for the general election. He claims that the closed primaries enable the more radical party activists to have an unequal say because the primary candidates will have to try and appeal to them and not to the more moderate public.

Third, Frymer (2011) argues that reforms of the campaign finance laws have contributed to party polarization. Legislation has given more opportunities for “one cause” interest groups and Political Action Committees to direct money to candidates with more extreme opinions. Fourth, Kupchan and Trubowitz (2007) and Frymer (2011) argue that partisan national broadcasting has played a role in polarization, as well. Fox

News on the conservative side and MSNBC on the liberal side provide biased information to their separate audiences. The development of social media has further created walls between different news realities.

2.1.2 Party Polarization in Foreign Policy

There is no scholarly consensus on whether party polarization is apparent in foreign policy. Some scholars argue that the traditional saying “Politics stops at water’s edge” applied to American foreign policy to some degree until the end of the Cold War (e.g. Jeong & Quirk, 2019). Another traditional theory was the “two presidencies” theory (e.g. Kupchan and Trubowitz, 2007), which entails that in domestic policy, party polarization prevails. As a contrast, the theory claims that in foreign policy, there is a bipartisan consensus behind the president. However, most scholars disagree with the two presidencies theory. They argue that party polarization has become part of American foreign policy in the post-Cold War era (Kupchan & Trubowitz, 2007; Hurst & Wroe 2016, Jeong & Quirk, 2019).

Jeong and Quirk (2019) have contributed to polarization research by providing three causes for party polarization over foreign policy. First, they claim that some major events in foreign policy have triggered rise in polarization. Among them were the end of the Cold War and the Iraq War. Second, they argue that general ideological polarization between liberalism and conservatism in domestic politics is reflected in foreign policy, as well. Third, they found that tight electoral rivalry has caused polarization both in domestic and in foreign policy. Members of Congress were likely to support their co-partisan president in matters of foreign policy because they thought that the success of the president would help their electoral success. Vice versa, members from the opposing party were likely to object the policies of the president who was from the opposing party. The narrower the margin of the majority in a chamber, the more polarized the politicians were along their party lines.

Kupchan and Trubowitz (2007) investigated the trend of party polarization in foreign policy. They provide an outlook on the US Congress’ foreign policy stands from the 1930s to 2007. Their main focus is in the post-Cold War era. As a background, they

argue that liberal internationalism is what they call the dominant Cold War era ideology behind America foreign policy. They argue that during the Cold War, there was bipartisan consensus over the combined use of power and over international cooperation. They claim that after the Cold War, the absence of an equal counterpower led to disarray in American foreign policy. In a unipolar world, there was more room for polarization over American foreign policy. As a result, they argue that Democrats ended up favoring multilateral partnership policy, whereas the Republicans preferred unilateral use of power.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, polarization over foreign policy increased rapidly and continued to do so throughout the 1990s. The 9/11 terrorist attacks momentarily brought the parties closer together in 2001. However, the 2003 Iraq War returned the growing cleavage between the parties. Kupchan and Trubowitz (2007) argue that the war on terrorism could not bring such lasting national unity as the Cold War did because the nature of the enemy was so different. They claim that fighting terrorism consists mainly of undercover operations and intelligence, the aim of which is to prevent attacks from happening in the first place. The Cold War, on the other hand, presented a hostile expansionist superpower that inspired national mobilization in the fight against it.

Kupchan and Trubowitz have revisited their argument on the demise of liberal internationalism in their 2010 article. They counter the argument that the election of President Obama has brought liberal internationalism back as the dominant ideology in American foreign policy. They argue that even though there are such traits in the foreign policy of the Obama administration, the party polarization over foreign policy is alive and well. This is demonstrated in the Republican party's strong opposition of the actions of the administration. Finally, the two scholars predict that support for active international engagement is likely to reduce over time, and that a new rise of isolationism will take place in American foreign policy.

Hurst and Wroe (2016) inspect the same time period as Kupchan and Trubowitz (2007) in their analysis of American foreign policy, namely the Cold War and post-Cold War era. Hurst and Wroe (2016) use the House of Representatives' roll-call votes on foreign policy from 1970 to 2012 as their data. They accuse Kupchan and Trubowitz (2007) of

presenting a too simplistic trend of an ever-widening polarization since the 1970s. Instead, Hurst and Wroe (2016) argue that no clearly increasing trend of party polarization in foreign policy can be found. According to them, the issue is more complex: there have been cycles with more and less polarization.

However, Hurst and Wroe (2016) admit that party polarization over foreign policy has increased starting from the 1994 midterm elections when Republicans took over the Congress and Democrat Clinton was president. Yet, they argue that the variation in the levels of polarization during the Clinton and Bush presidencies would require more thorough inspection. Finally, they claim that at the beginning of President Obama's term, there was a nudge towards more bipartisanship. Nonetheless, the polarization started to increase again towards the end of his first term.

2.2 The Traditional American Schools of Foreign Policy

The theoretical background for this thesis is based on Mead's (2001) categorization of four different schools in the American foreign policy: The Hamiltonian, the Wilsonian, the Jeffersonian, and the Jacksonian schools. Even though these schools originate from the 19th or early 20th century, Mead argues that they are well-suited to characterize the major American foreign policy orientations in the post-Cold War era.

2.2.1 From the "Cold War Dichotomy" to the Four Schools of Foreign Policy

Mead (2001) argues that between 1949 and 1989, there was a broad, general consensus about foreign policy in the United States: communism was a threat to the American interests and way of living, and therefore it should be contained. However, there were two different approaches in the more specific policies on how to deal with communism. The opposing ends of the foreign policy scale were the "realist hawks" and "idealist doves" (Mead 2001, 264-265).

The realist hawks preferred a strong military and a more aggressive approach to combatting communism. If required for the common security, the United States should take unilateral military action. Of the four traditional foreign policy schools, the Jacksonians and the Hamiltonians were the ones in favor of the realist policies. The idealist doves, on the other hand, favored multilateralism over unilateralism and economic aid over military aid. The doves argued that the US should provide an example of a superior political and economic system that all other countries in the world would want to follow. The Wilsonian and Jeffersonian schools leaned towards the idealist wing.

The collapse of the Soviet Union brought an end to the battle between capitalism and communism. The bipolar world order that had dictated the leading paradigm of the American foreign policy was history. The new, more complex arena of international politics opened up more options for foreign policy views and thus challenged the existing dichotomy between hawks and doves. Mead argues that new, arising challenges, such as trade issues, divided the two traditional camps into fractions (2001, 266).

The Jacksonians and the Hamiltonians had been hawks on the unilateral side, and the Wilsonians and Jeffersonians had been doves on the multilateral side. Suddenly, constant American activism against international communism was no longer needed. The foreign policy lines could no longer be drawn just between a unilateral and a multilateral foreign policy. A new division was created between internationalism and nationalism. If American security was no longer threatened, why should American soldiers risk their lives in combat on the other side of the world? Jacksonians and Jeffersonians took the nationalist side in the debate. Hamiltonians and Wilsonians, on the other hand, saw a chance in creating a new world order based on American interests and values. They chose the more internationalist approach.

In what follows, the four schools of foreign policy will be presented with regards to their ideas about the post-Cold War world order. First, the ideologies of the internationalist wing, the Hamiltonians and Wilsonians, are introduced. Then, the core ideas of the nationalists, Jeffersonians and Jacksonians, are represented. The table below gives an impression about the specialties of the four schools (the table was modified

from the version of professor Kari Möttölä). In the table, the schools are represented on a two-dimensional axis. The first dimension is the external orientation (internationalism vs nationalism). The second dimension is the strive for international political change (passivism vs activism).

Table 1. *The four schools of American foreign policy in the post-Cold War era.*

<div>Strive for international political change</div> <div>External orientation</div>	Passivism	Activism
	Doubt in and restraint to international political change	Trust in and strive for international political change through interventions
Internationalism (1) Regular participation in international affairs; (2) including commitment to multilateral order	(1) Passive internationalism Hamiltonian Unilateralism Great power centrality Carrot = stick Interests > values	(2) Active internationalism Wilsonian Multilateralism Institutionalism Carrot > stick Interests < values
Nationalism (3) Restraint in international participation; (4) or targeted influence without permanent commitments	(3) Passive nationalism Jeffersonian Isolationism Neo-sovereignty Carrot ≠ stick Interests < values	(4) Active nationalism Jacksonian Unilateralism Neo-conservatism Carrot < stick Interests = values
Characteristics of the schools: mix of structural and institutional approaches to influencing the external milieu; relation between persuasion and coercion as means of power; prioritization between American economic/security interests and American values in the promotion of US goals. (Table modified from the version created by professor Kari Möttölä, University of Helsinki: Schools of thought in external grand strategy for the United States: historical-ideational identification (as in Mead, 2001).)		

2.2.2 The Internationalists

The internationalists (the Hamiltonians and Wilsonians) saw the end of the Cold War as a chance for the United States to build a “new world order” (Mead 2001, 268).

However, they have differing ideals about the perfect world and the United States’ role in it. The Hamiltonians favor economics and the American unilateralism, whereas the Wilsonians give more value to the humanitarian aspects and multilateralism.

The corner stones of the Hamiltonian school are open trade, fiscal responsibility, and liberal finance (Mead 2001, 270). After the Cold War, the Hamiltonians wanted to create a world based on the American model of capitalism and system of free trade. The United States would be the driving force for creating suitable platforms to make this possible. Global economic institutions like the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank would play a key role together with regional trade agreements, such as NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement).

However, the Hamiltonians faced opposition from both Wilsonians and the nationalists: The Wilsonians thought that the Hamiltonians sacrificed environmental and humanitarian values together with the wages and jobs of American people on the altar of free trade. The nationalists claimed that the American standards of living suffered a moral sellout to countries with cheaper labor costs. Even though the Hamiltonian trade agenda resulted in cheaper goods for customers, the representatives of the more nationalist and protectionist schools thought the US should secure its own manufacturing sector better (Mead 2001, 270-280).

Whereas the Hamiltonians focused on the economy of the new world order, the Wilsonian agenda was based on establishing democratic regimes around the world. Assisting former Soviet states and satellites in their transition to a more Western democracy was the main goal of the Wilsonians. Furthermore, they wanted to secure the democratic peace by strengthening international institutions and law. The Wilsonians thought that multilateral political institutions like the United Nations should be the leading actors in forming international, environmental and humanitarian agreements (Mead 2001, 282-284).

The other internationalists, the Hamiltonians, opposed the Wilsonian strive for multilateral political institutions. The Hamiltonians thought that giving too much power to multilateral political institutions like the UN would pose a risk to the American sovereignty. In the eyes of the opposing schools, another problem of the Wilsonian school was that they wanted the United States to defend human rights of people around the world by protecting them from cruel dictators or in the most horrible cases even from genocide through humanitarian interventions. The nationalists (Jeffersonians and Jacksonians) disagreed because they did not want to risk any American lives for something that did not directly threaten the United States. Even the Hamiltonians thought that humanitarian intervention was too much, and that the US should only show internationalism on the economic sector by promoting free trade.

2.2.3 The Nationalists

The nationalists saw the end of the Cold War as a chance for the United States to reduce its international commitments (Mead 2001, 268-269). They wanted to make sure that the interests of American people came first. They did not support increasing the American presence in the world or creating a “new world order”. The two nationalist schools were the Jeffersonians and the Jacksonians.

The Jeffersonian ideology is the most isolationist and passive of all the four schools. Jeffersonians want to end or at least scale down all American overseas economic, political and military commitments. As a result, the budget of the army could be cut back heavily. The Hamiltonian free trade agenda is a nightmare for the Jeffersonians because it hurts American manufacturing and leads to falling wages and jobs being transported overseas. The Jeffersonians are in favor of a highly protectionist economy and a return to traditional American values (Mead 2001, 271-272, 297).

The Jacksonians share a sense of isolationism with the Jeffersonians to the point that they are willing to reduce all economic and political commitments of the US abroad. However, Jacksonians support a strong American military that is prepared to protect the US security in all possible ways. They are even willing to use military interventions overseas but only in case of a threat to the American people. In contrast to Wilsonians, a

humanitarian crisis is not alone a sufficient reason for Jacksonians to send American troops abroad (Mead 2001, 298-300).

2.3 Ideological Differences over Foreign Policy between and within the American Parties

While Mead's four traditional schools of foreign policy are one step away from the Cold War dichotomy, that theory is not best suited for the analysis of party ideologies. After all, his thesis focuses on party policies towards Europe, and the data does not provide a comprehensive outlook on American foreign policy. Therefore, a more detailed theory over ideological differences within and between the parties is presented in this section.

As in all fields of politics, liberals and conservatives have differing ideological views on foreign policy. According to Peter Hayes Gries, the main ideological difference in foreign policy lies in the juxtaposition of internationalism and idealism on one side, against nationalism and realism on the other side (2014, 99). Under the umbrellas of these two main categories, Gries has investigated the ideological differences in more detail and listed seven more specific foreign policy orientations. The seven different foreign policy orientations, listed under the concepts of internationalism/idealism and nationalism/realism, are:

Internationalism and idealism

1. Multilateralism
2. Humanitarianism
3. Political idealism
4. Religious idealism

Nationalism and realism

5. Isolationism
6. Military force
7. Nationalism

Internationalism and idealism in the context of foreign policy mean belief in international institutions, diplomacy, development aid and humanitarian interventions. What is more, internationalism can be understood as eagerness to achieve international change for example by promoting democracy or protecting people against religious persecution. To sum up, Gries argues that the four foreign policy orientations under internationalism and idealism gain more support among the liberals: multilateralism, humanitarianism, political idealism, and religious idealism (2014, 99).

Conservatives, on the other hand, are generally more nationalistic and realist than liberals, says Gries (2014, 99). They want the United States to act unilaterally rather than to follow the rules of international institutions. What is more, they prefer the US to keep to themselves and not to engage in international activities unless the national security is threatened. If the situation demands action, conservatives believe in security through power, and in use of military might instead of diplomacy. Finally, conservatives tend to be more nationalist than liberals. Gries does not limit nationalism to patriotism, namely the love of the home country. He argues that in this context, nationalism means the belief in American superiority over any other nation. To conclude, Gries argues that out of the seven foreign policy orientations the most common among conservatives are isolationism, use of military force, and nationalism (2014, 99).

However, the ideological division between conservatives and liberals in foreign policy is not so clean-cut as the generalizations suggest. In his research, Gries has found out that there are divisions both between and within the conservative and liberal groups. Focusing on political elites, Gries lays out the intraparty foreign policy differences in the Republican and Democratic parties. According to him, there are two foreign policy profiles among the Republicans, and three foreign policy profiles among the Democrats. In what follows, the main characteristics of these five profiles are presented.

2.3.1 Republican Foreign Policy Profiles

Within the Republican party, Gries argues that there are two main kinds of foreign policy profiles: the “Cautious Idealists” and the “Isolationist Skeptics” (2014, 124-125). Characteristics that apply to all Republicans, both Cautious Idealists and Isolationist

Skeptics, are the belief in American supremacy over other nations, eagerness to use military force and preferring American unilateralism as opposed to supporting multilateral institutions.

Most of the Republicans are Cautious Idealists: two out of three Republicans belong to this category. Their priorities in foreign policy are Nationalism, Military force, Religious idealism, Political idealism, and Humanitarianism. Hence, they are willing to engage in international activities beyond protecting American national security. Promoting democracy and protecting fellow Christians and Jews against persecution are typical goals for Cautious Idealist Republicans, to name a few. However, these goals are frequently justified with a nationalist undertone.

The other group, Isolationist Skeptics, constitutes the remaining one-third of the Republicans. The main difference between the two Republican groups is the degree of isolationism. As their name suggests, Isolationist Skeptics would only act abroad if the national security is threatened. Moreover, the Isolationist Skeptics are more hostile towards multilateral international institutions than the Cautious Idealists.

Table 2. *Republican Foreign Policy Profiles and their Policy Orientations.*

Meaning of the colors	High scores in this orientation	Medium scores in this orientation	Low scores in this orientation
Republican Foreign Policy Profiles	64% Cautious Idealists	36% Isolationist Skeptics	
Isolationism			
Multilateralism			
Military force			
Humanitarianism			
Political idealism			
Religious idealism			
Nationalism			

2.3.2 Democratic Foreign Policy Profiles

There are significant foreign policy divisions within the Democratic party as well. In the Democratic party, Gries argues that there are three main kinds of foreign policy profiles: the “Forceful Idealists”, the “Global Citizens”, and the “Skeptics” (2014, 125-127). The members of the Democratic party are almost evenly divided between these three groups. The largest group, Forceful Idealists, constitutes 38% of the party members. Global Citizens make up 34% and Skeptics the remaining 28% of the party members.

Out of the three profiles, the Forceful Idealists are the most internationally oriented and active group. They have high scores in all foreign policy orientations except one: isolationism. The rest of the orientations are all almost equally much valued among the Forceful Idealists: Humanitarianism has the highest score, but right at its tails are Military Force, Nationalism, Multilateralism, Religious Idealism, and Political Idealism. Gries describes them as “humanitarian hawks” because they are interested in advancing democracy and protecting human rights abroad but are willing to use military force to achieve these goals.

The second largest group, Global Citizens, differs from Forceful Idealists most when it comes to nationalism and use of military force. The Forceful Idealists score high in these orientations, whereas the Global Citizens are significantly less nationalist and more reluctant to use military force. Global Citizens have the highest scores in humanitarianism and multilateralism, but political and religious idealism are not far behind.

The smallest group among Democratic foreign policy profiles is called the Skeptics. The most important thing that sets the Skeptics apart from the two other Democratic foreign policy orientations is that they are the only isolationist group in the Democratic party. They resemble the Republican group Isolationist Skeptics in many aspects: they both favor nationalism, military force and isolationism more than the other groups. However, there is one significant difference that separates the two: The Democratic Skeptics believe more in multilateralism than their Republican equivalents.

Table 3. *Democratic Foreign Policy Profiles and their Policy Orientations.*

Meaning of the colors	High scores in this orientation	Medium scores in this orientation	Low scores in this orientation
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Democratic Foreign Policy Profiles	38% Forceful Idealists	34% Global Citizens	28% Skeptics
Isolationism			
Multilateralism			
Military force			
Humanitarianism			
Political idealism			
Religious idealism			
Nationalism			

3 Previous Research about Party Platforms

The primary data for this paper are the Democratic and Republican party platforms of the American presidential elections in the post-Cold War era (1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008, 2012, and 2016). Party platforms are policy papers in which the parties take stance on all the issues that the president and the federal government have a mandate to decide on. The focus of the platforms is usually on domestic politics, but the parties also discuss foreign politics to some degree. The platforms are written by the party officials and published in the party's national convention. The 14 party platforms are available online on the webpage of the American Presidency Project (retrieved on September 2, 2016).

Party platforms, also known as manifestoes, are the general programs of the parties. In the US, party platforms are published every four years as part of presidential election campaigns. The publication takes place in the respective parties' national conventions in late summer. In the conventions, the presidential candidates are officially nominated for the general election. The attention of the media and the public is usually drawn to the speeches held at the convention. The acceptance speech of the party's presidential nominee is considered the most important event of the convention nowadays (Disalvo and Ceaser, 2016).

Despite the public interest towards candidate speeches and TV-debates between the presidential nominees, this thesis does not extend its scope of data to them. This demarcation was made because the focus of this paper is on the partisan and not on the candidate level. Moreover, a variety of issues are handled in the party platforms but only few of them make it to the campaign speeches (Words not spoken, 2012). Because transatlantic relations have no longer been a priority of the American presidential elections in the last few decades, the topic has not been raised as often in speeches and TV-debates. Because the party platforms contain the ideological principles of the parties and cover all policies the parties deem appropriate, they provide more information about the Euro-American relations than the speeches or TV-debates would. Finally, party platforms are not as frequently used data in academic research. Thus, they provide a unique perspective to transatlantic relations.

This chapter begins with a debate on whether the party platforms are relevant documents at all. Second, previous research about ideological differences in the party platforms is represented. Most of the research on party platforms is about general liberal-conservative ideological differences between Democrats and Republicans. However, scholars disagree about the degree of ideological polarization in the platforms. Third, the process of how the party platforms are written is described.

3.1 The Relevance of Party Platforms

Scholars disagree on the importance of party platforms. This section first explains why some scholars claim that party platforms do not matter. After that, counterarguments are provided. There are scholars who acknowledge the shortcomings of party platforms but still claim that party platforms are worth researching.

Maisel (1994) describes the dilemma in his article about candidate centered party platforms. On one hand, party platforms are the most essential documents of a party. They contain the party's values, visions, and political agendas. What is said in the platforms is what the electorate can expect the party to do when elected. On the other hand, Maisel characterizes party platforms as "worthless pieces of paper" (Maisel 1994, 671). He points out that because the platforms are not binding, they can contain empty promises. What is more, Maisel and many political journalists argue that most people will never read the party platforms. A case in point is the Republican 1996 presidential candidate Bob Dole who famously said that he had never read the party platform and never would (Azari & Engel, 2007).

Disalvo and Ceaser (2016) agree with Maisel (1994) that the party platforms, once centerpieces of a party's presidential campaign, have lost their significance over time. They provide three reasons for this development: the method of selecting the presidential nominees, the changed relationship between the presidential candidate and their party, and the development of communications technology.

First, the introduction of primary elections in the 1970s changed the dynamics of parties' national conventions. Until then, the battles between the candidates had taken place in the national convention. As a result, the convention had been the forum for heated debates over the contents of the party platforms. Since the 1970s, primaries and caucuses replaced the national convention as the main contest arena. The candidates and their campaigns shifted focus from the party activists of the national convention to the larger mass of primary voters. The national convention simply became the forum where the results of the primaries were registered and the official nomination to general elections took place.

Second, the relationship between the party and the nominee changed. Previously, the party platform had dictated the agenda for the presidential campaign. The nominee was expected to agree on and to promote the policies of the party platform written by the party machine. As a result of the primary elections, the relationship turned the other way around: the party platform became a product of the victorious candidate. In the primaries, the winning candidate had gathered the most delegates to the national convention. Therefore, the contents of the party platform were dictated by the staff of the victorious candidate and could not be challenged by others. The party platform had become a "candidate platform" (Disalvo & Ceaser, 2016; Maisel, 1994).

Third, the transformation of media has shifted the focus from party platforms to candidate speeches. Disalvo and Ceaser (2016) argue that in the era of national broadcasting television and unlimited Internet access, the elections have become more and more candidate centered. As a result, the primary campaigns, TV-debates, and the presidential nominees' acceptance speeches have become the main targets of people's attention. Whereas the contents of a party platform used to define the substance of the general elections campaign in the past, the acceptance speech is considered to play that role today. Even if there were to be differences between the party platform and the acceptance speech, the public's attention would be on the contents of the speech. Disalvo and Ceaser (2016) conclude that nowadays, the purpose of the national convention is to provide the setting and audience to the nominee's acceptance speech. The party platform has been reduced to a mere side-product.

However, political scientists agree on three situations where the party platforms can be beneficial. First, party platforms are useful when the goal is to compare the parties and their agendas with each other (Maisel, 1994; Khimm, 2012). After all, party platforms are the most important documents that the parties produce. They contain the principles and priorities of the parties' policies. Second, the platforms can reflect the internal debates and ideological change within a party over time (Khim, 2012; Disalvo & Ceaser, 2016; Stein, 2016). Through analyzing the platforms, it is possible to learn about the internal dynamics and changes in the priorities of the parties' policies. Third, platforms are promises (Azari & Engel, 2007; Payne, 2013). Party platforms create expectations about future policies, and they can be used to hold parties accountable.

To discuss the first argument about the usefulness of party platforms, one must ask: What is the added value that a comparison between the two parties' platforms brings? Even if there were differences between the party platforms of the Democrats and the Republicans, can the platforms influence the election's outcome? Some scholars argue that they most likely cannot, because the public and the media do not pay attention to them (Disalvo & Ceaser, 2016). However, an exception proves the rule. Maisel (1994) argues that the platforms did play a role in the 1992 presidential elections. He writes that the 1992 Democratic and Republican party platforms were so different from each other that even the press noticed.

The second argument about the usefulness of party platforms is that through them, it is possible to detect ideological change and internal conflicts within the parties (Azari & Engel, 2007; Disalvo & Ceaser, 2016). In their article, Azari and Engel (2007) focus on intraparty ideological change. They argue that intraparty ideological change is an elite-driven process that is caused by power struggles between the parties' internal factions. In more detail, they claim that ideological change can appear in the party platforms in two ways: through issue position and through issue emphasis.

Azari and Engel (2007) say that changes in issue positions from one platform to another are easy to detect: the policy recommendations for a specific issue is different in one platform compared to the other. Furthermore, they define issue emphasis as a more subtle process. At its simplest, it can mean that something new has been added to the platform or something has been removed from it. However, it can also mean that parties

have made changes in their priorities over issues that are handled in more than one party platform. Issue emphasis can appear through both the order in which the issues are presented and the length of their description in the platform. To summarize, if a plank of text in a party platform is changed from the previous party platform, it means that attention has been devoted to that issue.

Stein (2016) agrees with Disalvo and Ceaser (2016) on the fact that intra-party debates and ideological change could be detected in the drafting process of the 2016 party platforms. Yet, the scholars doubt if ideological shifts have any concrete consequences since the party platform is not a binding document. Khimm (2012) writes that the candidate can choose which policies they will agree with and which they will ignore. She argues that sometimes the candidate may abandon their party's official policy position in order to appeal to the more moderate electorate.

However, Khimm (2012) continues that usually the candidate does not deliberately pose themselves against the party's policies. The possible inconsistency between the candidate's and the party platform's policies depends on the nature of the platform drafting process. Even though the party platform has become more candidate centered, it is still more or less a compromise made by party leaders, party activists and the nominee's campaign staff.

The third argument about the usefulness of party platforms is that they contain promises that create expectations about future policies (Azari & Engel, 2007). Payne (2013) agrees and claims that the promises made in the party platforms matter. To provide evidence, he analyzed Democratic and Republican party platforms from 1980 until 2004. He identified every concrete pledge in the platforms and compared them to the votes taken in the Congress. Payne discovered that the parties voted in line with their promises more than 80 percent of the time. He compared the result to a study that had used the same criteria in an analysis of party platforms between 1944 and 1976. The surprising result was that the consistency between promises and voting had increased over time. In the pre-1980 era, the members of Congress had only voted consistently with the platforms about 66 percent of the time.

Finally, the dilemma of the unpopularity of party platforms persists. What is their relevancy if even the candidates or party leaders, let alone the electorate, do not bother to familiarize themselves with the documents? Khimm (2012) argues that there are people who still care about the contents of party platforms. These people are party activists and interest groups. For them, party platforms are a part of the political apparatus, in that they are official party documents that contain promises in black-and-white. As part of their lobbying strategy, party factions and interest groups try to influence the contents of the party platforms to gain more foothold for their specific policy ambitions within the parties.

In conclusion, the discussion about party platforms and their usefulness is twofold. On one hand, party platforms have lost their significance over time; they are not binding documents, and most people will never read them. On the other hand, party platforms are the most important documents that the parties produce. They are useful when someone wants to compare the parties and their agendas with each other or to investigate internal ideological change within a party over time. Even though the party platforms are not binding, politicians tend to vote in accordance with them in the Congress. Finally, there are people who are interested in the party platforms: party activists, interest groups, and some political scientists.

3.2 Ideological Differences in the Party Platforms

Political science scholars have used American party platforms as data in their research on party ideologies and partisan differences. Gerring (1998) argues that the study of party ideologies is the essence of political science. He continues that because political parties are key political players, research on their most important documents, the party platforms, reveals the values and attitudes that form the foundations of politics. In his extensive study of party platforms from 1828 to 1996, Gerring observes that American parties have distinct ideologies and policy positions that are apparent in the party platforms across decades. Moreover, Gerring pays attention to the ideological change within a party over time that is demonstrated in the party platforms.

Kidd (2008) says that traditionally, during elections, media attention and scholars have focused on individual candidates and their speeches. He chose party platforms as his data because he wanted to provide a new angle in electoral research. In his article, Kidd examines the relative left-right ideological position of the Republicans and Democrats on domestic policy. His dataset consists of the national party platforms of the 1996, 2000, and 2004 presidential elections. As a method, he applies a computerized word scoring technique.

Kidd's (2008) hypothesis is that the Democratic and Republican parties' positions on general social and economic issues are similar. The hypothesis is based on the "Median Voter Theorem" that assumes that most voters are moderates. The theorem argues that the parties are driven to adopt policies close to the median point of the ideological continuum to attract as many voters as possible. As a result of the theorem, the platforms are likely to resemble each other ideologically.

In his article, Kidd (2008) argues that the "Median Voter Theorem" holds true. Even though the platforms show that some ideological differences in domestic policy exist between the parties, the ideological gap appears to get smaller in the time period from the 1996 elections to the 2004 elections. However, he discovered changes in the intraparty ideologies as well. Between 1996 and 2004, both the Democratic and the Republican party had moved ideologically towards the left side.

In contrast to Kidd (2008), Coffey (2011) argues that ideological differences between parties are apparent in party platforms. He accuses Kidd of missing some of the content of the platforms because he used the computerized word scoring method. According to Coffey, the computerized method provides reliable but not necessarily valid results. In his analysis of state level party platforms from elections between 2000 and 2004, Coffey (2011) uses qualitative content analysis to investigate the ideological differences in domestic policy. To increase the validity of the analysis, he reviewed every coded sentence manually.

Coffey (2011) argues that the results of his study prove that the Median Voter Theorem does not apply to party platforms. He discovered significant ideological differences between the Democrats' and Republicans' party platforms. Additionally, the platforms

seemed to be centrifugal: they pushed each other into the opposing ends of the ideological continuum. The more liberal the Democratic party platform, the more conservative the Republican party platform.

Hence, Coffey's discovery is contradictory to the Median Voter Theorem. Finally, Coffey argues that this ideological polarization between the party platforms exists because they are written by the party activists. Coffey claims that the active party members often have the most extreme opinions that are thus reflected in the platforms. Klingemann, Hofferbert, and Budge (1994) agree with Coffey that differences between two parties can be detected in party platforms. In their study, they discovered that American national party platforms are nearly as distinct from each other as many manifestos in European party systems.

Finally, Simas and Evans (2011) have investigated whether American people can link party platforms to presidential candidates' policy positions. Their aim was to show that party platforms matter even in the era of candidate-centered elections. Simas and Evans are realistic and admit that few voters read the party platforms from cover to cover. Nonetheless, they argue that the content of the platform is reflected in the party's presidential campaign. Yet sometimes the presidential candidate disagrees with some of the details in the platform because the platform is a product of intraparty compromise. All in all, Simas and Evans (2011) found that people can identify the connection between the party platform and the party's presidential campaign. They conclude that the voters' attention to party platforms depends on their level of education and interest in politics.

3.3 How Party Platforms Are Written

The procedure of platform writing depends on the party rules. Therefore, the platform writing process is different among the Democrats and the Republicans. Maisel (1994) characterizes the difference by saying that the Democrats give more role to the national party elite, whereas the Republicans give more autonomy to the state and local party organizations. Besides, the process of platform writing has changed within the parties over time. In this section, the procedures behind the 1992 and 2016 party platforms are

outlined in more detail. These party platforms were chosen as examples because their writing processes and outcomes highlight the inter-party and intra-party differences.

As a case in point of inter-party differences, Maisel (1994) writes that the 1992 Democratic and Republican party platforms were so different from each other that even the press noticed it. Maisel is confident that the 1992 Republican party platform was so conservative that it isolated the more moderate voters. Thus, it hurt the campaign of the incumbent President George H. Bush. According to Maisel, this impression was reaffirmed by journalists who wrote that the Republican party had been taken over by the religious right wing. Furthermore, Maisel argues that the 1992 Democratic party platform was skillfully crafted by the centralist staff of the Bill Clinton campaign. The successful goal of the campaign was to appeal to the more moderate voters by abandoning the most liberal rhetoric of the past platforms.

Additionally, Disalvo and Ceaser (2016) and Stein (2016) argue that the 2016 party platforms also show an example of intra-party ideological change. They claim that the 2016 party platforms have the most contested drafting processes of this century behind them. This was caused by the ideological differences between primary candidates and the parties. First, Disalvo and Ceaser suggest that the runner-up Democratic primary candidate Bernie Sanders succeeded in moving the Democratic party platform ideologically to the left. Second, they argue that the Republican party platform shows that the policy positions of the Republican nominee Donald Trump are at odds with some of the traditional conservative policies. According to them, the Republican party has used the party platform to signal the distance between them and the nominee Donald Trump.

3.3.1 The 1992 “Candidate-Centered” Party Platforms

The 1992 party platform processes are presented by Maisel (1994). What was common for both parties was that the process was divided into three stages. The party staff wrote the first draft. Then, one or more subdivisions of the Platform Committee edited the second draft. The Democrats had one Drafting Committee at that stage, whereas the Republicans divided the platform draft into policy sections and went through them in

the many subcommittees of the Republican Committee on Resolutions. Finally, the Platform Committees of the respective parties composed the final drafts of the party platforms that were adopted by respective national conventions without amendments.

In 1992, the Republican Platform Committee, officially called the Committee on Resolutions, was comprised of seven chairpersons and 107 delegates from the American states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, one man and one woman from each, and one male delegate from each smaller territory. The leaders of the Platform Committee were appointed by the Bush-Quayle re-election committee. Maisel (1994) writes that as an attempt to please the conservative wing of the party, the committee leaders were chosen among the most conservative Republicans. Because incumbent President Bush faced no opposition in the primaries, all committee members were officially his delegates. Even though most of them were prominent politicians in their states, Maisel claims that some states had appointed one-issue-activists. As a result, Maisel argues that the Republican party platform became more conservative than President Bush would have been comfortable with.

The platform writing process was divided into three steps. The process began with the Republican party staff preparing a working paper. One week before the national convention, this draft platform was presented to six subcommittees that each handled one policy area. Maisel (1994) writes that there was not much debate about the contents. He speculates if it was because the members of the subcommittees were so homogenous when it comes to gender and ideology. Immediately after the subcommittees had finished their work, the full committee meeting took place. The final platform was adopted by the full national convention without debate or amendments.

In the 1992 platform writing process, Maisel (1994) writes, the Democrats appointed party centrists as chairpersons, co-chairs and vice chairs of the Party Platform Committee so that the platform would become as moderate as possible. The group of chairs deliberately reflected the diversity and values of the Democratic party by having equal number of men and women, as well as some racial minorities. The chairpersons were of high political profile from around the country, but Maisel says that their role was rather symbolic.

In addition to the chairpersons, the Democratic Platform Committee consisted of 161 delegates who represented states and territories according to population and Democratic strength, and of 25 party leaders and elected officials who were state party elite, congressional leadership, major party donors and representatives of specific groups close to the Democratic ideology. However, Maisel (1994) adds that the official Platform Committee only had one day to go through the party platform. Therefore, the real influence on the contents of the platform had taken place in the earlier stages.

The platform writing process started with mainly people from the Clinton campaign staff preparing a working paper to structure the discussion of the Drafting Committee, a sub-committee of the Platform Committee. One half of the Drafting Committee consisted of members and supporters of the Clinton campaign, and the other half consisted of the representatives of groups important to the party. Maisel (1994) argues that the dominance of the Clinton campaign staff at the drafting stage was crucial for the outcome of the platform.

Maisel (1994) accuses the party platform writing processes of being democratic only by appearance, not in reality. He provides two reasons: the lack of debate about the contents and the closedness of the platform process. First, Maisel writes that there were no real battles about the contents of the party platforms. He argues that the lack of debate can be attributed to who oversaw writing the party platforms: the staffs of the presidential nominees. Because they had the majority during the whole process, any opposing factions had no chance in getting their suggestions through. As Maisel summarizes the results: the 1992 party platforms were candidate-centered party platforms. Disappointed, he concludes that the party platforms were an evidence that parties exist to win the presidential elections, not to advance policy goals.

Second, the closedness of the party platform process has been criticized by both Maisel (1994) and Porter (2013). Before preparing the initial draft of the party platform, both parties held one or more hearings of stakeholders. Nonetheless, Maisel (1994) argues that the hearing phase is only ceremonial. It provides interest groups that are close to the respective party an opportunity to be heard, but Maisel claims that they have no significant impact on the content of the platform.

Between 1992 and 2012, nothing had changed when it comes to perceived lack of democracy in the platform writing process. Porter (2013) argues that because ordinary party members nowadays can have a say on *who* the candidate is through the primaries, they should get a say on *what* the candidate's agenda is through a more open platform writing process. He speculates that an open query for registered party members on policy matters, the results of which would guide the platform writing process, could attract more public attention to the finished platform documents as well. Porter concludes that an institutionalized role for ordinary people in the platform writing process could increase levels of democratic participation, make parties more accountable to their members, and reshape their policy agendas in fresh ways.

Victor and Reinhardt (2018) have investigated the role of interest groups in the platform writing process in more detail. Their analysis compares the contents of interest group testimonies to the contents of Democratic and Republican party platforms of 1996, 2000, and 2004. The results show that the interest groups' positions were reflected in party platforms if the groups were ideologically proximate to party median policies and if the groups displayed party loyalty. The richness or lack of resources of the interest groups had no significant effect. One can argue that the results were not surprising. If the policy positions of a party and an interest group are similar, it is likely that the position would have ended up in the party platform regardless of the participation of the interest group in the hearings.

3.3.2 How the 2016 Party Platforms Reveal Intra-Party Tensions

In their article, Disalvo and Ceaser (2016) report that the context of the 2016 party platform writing was inflamed with intra-party conflicts in both parties. They argue that because of those tensions, the platform processes were the most interesting ones that had taken place in many decades. In this section, the circumstances behind the 2016 party platforms are presented.

In 2016, the Republican Platform Committee had expanded its size to 112 delegates – one man and one woman from each of the states, territories, and the District of Columbia. Similar to how it was in 1992, each state determines on its own how to

choose the two delegates. This time, however, the Republicans strived to make the platform writing process more inclusive. Volunteers and Platform Committee staff held hearings for groups and individuals. What is more, Republicans around the country were given an opportunity to have a say on the policy positions of the platform through an online portal (Roarty, 2016). The vision of Porter (2013) had become true, even though the results of the query were not binding to the party.

However, the 2016 circumstances around the Republican national convention were extraordinary. Until June 2016, it seemed that there might be more than one candidate running for the nomination in a contested convention. However, after a long and nasty primary season, one candidate had emerged as the winner: Donald Trump. What was problematic for the Republican party, was that the policy positions of Donald Trump and the traditional positions of the Republican party were different in many regards, for example in international trade and American involvement in NATO.

Roarty (2016) describes the dilemma: Usually, the presidential nominee is a “calming influence” over the platform writing process. Typically, many if not most of the Platform Committee members are supporters of the nominee and strive to alter the contents of the platform to suit the opinions of the nominee. However, in 2016, it was likely that the Republican party platform would have different policy positions than the party’s presidential nominee.

Disalvo and Ceaser (2016) write that many notable Republicans even hoped that the party platform would put some distance between the party’s nominee and them and the party as such. The two scholars conclude that the 2016 Republican party platform ended up being a compromise between traditional conservative policies and the policy positions of their nominee, Donald Trump. Republican candidates on state and local level had the opportunity to run based on the party’s long-established policies, even though the platform conceded to Trump on some positions, such as the wall at the Mexican border, and restrictions on free trade.

In a similar fashion to the Republicans, the Democrats had also paid attention to making the platform process more democratic. For the first time, they held a series of events across the country to discuss their policy positions, and thousands of registered

Democrats participated through videos and written statements. Even though the primaries of the Democrats were not as dramatic as on the Republican side, serious contest took place between the party nominee Hillary Clinton and the runner-up Bernie Sanders. Because of that, the Platform Drafting Committee comprised of appointees from both campaigns.

Disalvo and Ceaser (2016) write that the unforeseen success of Sanders in the primary elections created pressure about the contents of both the Clinton campaign and the party platform. Even though Sanders lost the nomination, he and his expanded group of followers insisted that the platform be the most progressive Democratic platform in history. The Sanders campaign succeeded in their quest: Disalvo and Ceaser write that the final platform contained many leftist elements of the Sanders campaign especially in economic policy.

In conclusion, the elections of 2016 showed that party platforms still have the ability to become an interesting part of the presidential election campaign. Disalvo and Ceaser (2016) argue that the platform writing processes were revealing of the political climate as a whole. The party platforms became pieces of evidence of intra-party conflicts.

4 The Qualitative Content Analysis Method

This chapter begins with introducing the qualitative content analysis method. In addition, the special characteristics and steps of the qualitative content analysis are explained. The last sub-chapter explains how the method is implemented in this thesis. The process of constructing the coding frame as well as an outline of the coding frame are presented.

Schreier (2012) characterizes qualitative content analysis as a systematic method that describes and presents a structure of the analyzed data by classifying the contents into categories of a coding frame. In this thesis, qualitative content analysis is used as a method for studying the Democrats' and Republicans' policies towards Europe in their party platforms. Qualitative content analysis is well suited for this purpose as it supports research questions that are descriptive and comparative in nature (Schreier 2012).

Traditionally, the concept *content analysis* has referred to quantitative content analysis. However, Mayring (2000) writes that the solely quantitative dimension was contested in 1952 by Siegfried Kracauer. He argues that the importance of different meanings in a text could not be judged purely based on the frequency of their appearance. Often, meaning is complex and context-dependent, and some important aspects of a meaning can appear only once in a text. Therefore, qualitative content analysis is needed to grasp these dimensions.

When it comes to the reasons for choosing this method for the thesis, Kracauer's arguments about the virtues of qualitative content analysis play an important role. Content analysis in general is a useful tool to systematically analyze in what contexts Europe has been mentioned in the post-Cold War American presidential elections' party platforms. Qualitative content analysis was chosen over the quantitative one because the total amount of times that Europe was mentioned in the party platforms is relatively small. Had the time frame included more elections, quantitative analysis could have provided relevant results as well. However, with this narrow time frame, it is more useful to take an in-depth look at even single aspects mentioned in the platforms.

Moreover, qualitative content analysis leaves more room for interpretation and hands over a larger role to the broader context of the data than the quantitative approach. Devi Prasad praises qualitative content analysis for its ability to reveal meanings, themes and patterns in the data as opposed to merely counting word scores (2019).

4.1 Characteristics of Qualitative Content Analysis

In this subchapter, the specialties of qualitative content analysis are introduced. According to Schreier (2012), qualitative content analysis has three important characteristics: it is systematic, flexible, and it reduces data.

First and foremost, qualitative content analysis is a systematic method in three respects: all relevant data is examined, the process consists of the same sequence of steps, and the coding needs to be tested for consistency (Mayring, 2014). However, one should bear in mind that in qualitative content analysis, “the relevant data” that will be examined thoroughly is still restricted through the angle provided by the research questions. What this means is that the coding frame cannot purely be based on concepts and theories provided beforehand, but that at least some part of it is created specifically to fit each dataset.

Another piece of evidence proving the systematic nature is that the process of qualitative content analysis always involves the same eight steps (as listed by Schreier 2012, 6):

1. Deciding on your research question
2. Selecting your data
3. Building a coding frame
4. Dividing your data into units of coding
5. Trying out your coding frame
6. Evaluating and modifying your coding frame
7. Main analysis
8. Interpreting and presenting your findings

Of these eight steps, the processes from building a coding frame to conducting the main analysis are specific to qualitative content analysis. These five steps are explained in more detail later in the next subchapter.

The third aspect of the systematic nature of qualitative content analysis is the need for consistency checks. Consistency is related to the concept of reliability: building the coding frame and classifying the data accordingly must go beyond individual understanding and interpretations. There are two options for testing the consistency of the coding: getting it checked by at least two different coders or checking it at different points in time (Elo et al. 2014).

Besides being systematic, Schreier (2012) argues that another important characteristic of qualitative content analysis is that it is flexible. The flexibility means that the coding frame is always tailored to the specific traits of the specific data. This data-driven nature of qualitative content analysis increases the validity of the research. The coding frame is valid if it captures what it is supposed to capture in the data. Elo and Kyngäs (2008) point out that compared to qualitative content analysis, quantitative content analysis is more at risk of failing the validity check. In the quantitative tradition, concept-driven or standardized coding frames are more common.

The third characteristic of qualitative content analysis listed by Schreier is what distinguishes qualitative content analysis from other qualitative methods: it reduces data. The data is reduced because the research questions determine the relevant parts of the material, hence the analysis is not conducted on all the aspects of the document. Additionally, the specific information provided by the data is categorized and coded into more abstract, higher-order categories. However, Schreier points out that in a sense, even qualitative content analysis produces new information. The information is not provided on the individual level, as is the case with other qualitative methods, but on the aggregate level. That is why qualitative content analysis is so well suited for comparing information across cases (Schreier, 2012).

There are some limitations to the qualitative content analysis method. In contrast to other qualitative methods, qualitative content analysis is not a spiral, namely a hermeneutical process consisting of an ever-deepening analysis of the different layers in

the text. Therefore, it does not offer a holistic overview over the whole data. Instead, qualitative content analysis is restricted to the angle provided by the research questions (Schreier 2012).

There are different schools in qualitative content analysis that disagree on whether the method can be used for drawing conclusions that go beyond the studied texts. In their debate on the trustworthiness of qualitative content analysis, Elo et al. (2014) raise this aspect of transferability as one criterion for trustworthiness. The limitation of qualitative content analysis is that it only describes the meaning of what is said in the data, not *how* it is said or *what is not included* in the texts (Schreier, 2012). To tackle this concern, qualitative content analysis can be combined with other qualitative methods. In this thesis, traditional qualitative content analysis is accompanied by an analysis about how Europe is mentioned in the party platforms.

4.2 The Steps of Qualitative Content Analysis

In this subchapter, the five steps that are specific to qualitative content analysis are explained. The steps are: Building a coding frame, dividing your data into units of coding, trying out your coding frame, evaluating and modifying your coding frame, and conducting the main analysis.

Building a coding frame is the starting point of the hands-on phase of qualitative content analysis. A coding frame consists of the upper-level main categories (also called dimensions) that are created based on the angle of the research questions. The next step is to create subcategories that elaborate on what exactly is said in the text about the main categories. According to Schreier (2012), the coder can work either deductively (in a concept-driven way) or inductively (in a data-driven way). In this thesis, the coding frame is built inductively.

Dividing your data into units of coding, in other words called segmentation, means dividing the text material into shorter sections – units of coding – so that one section will fit into at least one but not too many categories. Schreier argues that segmentation helps keep a clear focus on the research questions and what is to be found in the data.

The length of a unit of coding can vary between a couple of words to several paragraphs. The suitable length depends on the categories: each unit can be part of multiple main categories but only one sub-category within a main category (Schreier, 2012).

Trying out the coding frame means that there should be a “pilot phase” where the coding frame is applied to part of the data. Schreier (2012) claims that no coding frame can be perfect the first time, so this is an essential step in the process. After the first coding experiment, evaluation and modification of the coding frame is crucial. The most important requirements for a coding frame are reliability and validity (Mayring, 2000). Reliability means checking the coding frame for errors and objectivity either through comparison across two coders or comparison across two points in time. Validity implies that the categories in the coding frame represent the data. If the coding frame is based on theories only, there is a risk that it is not valid for the data at hand (Schreier, 2012).

Other requirements for the coding frame are unidimensionality, mutual exclusiveness, exhaustiveness, and saturation. Unidimensionality means that a main category of the coding frame should only contain one aspect of the data. The main categories shall not have identical subcategories. Mutual exclusiveness means practically the same as unidimensionality except on a lower level: a unit of coding should be included in only one subcategory within a given main category (Schreier, 2012).

The exhaustiveness requirement means that each unit of coding is assigned to at least one subcategory in the coding frame. This is important because of the systematic characteristic of qualitative content analysis: all relevant data must be analyzed. The saturation requirement implies that all categories and sub-categories in the coding scheme must be used at least once. No empty categories are allowed (Schreier, 2012).

Conducting the main analysis means applying all the aforementioned steps in your relevant data. Finally, the results of the analysis can be presented in either qualitative or quantitative ways (Mayring, 2000). A virtue of mixing qualitative and quantitative steps of analysis is that quantification of the appearance of categories can provide more information about the meaning and importance of the categories (Mayring, 2014).

However, Schreier (2012) points out that the risk in quantifying the results is that the focus will shift from contents to categories.

4.3 The Coding Frame

The coding frame in this thesis will be data-driven, which means that it is based on reading through the party platforms. The coding will be conducted in the coding program Atlas.ti. In order to make the comparison across party platforms easier, the results will be quantified to some degree. However, examples of the cases will be provided so that detailed information will not be lost. In this subchapter, the process behind building the coding frame for this thesis is outlined. In addition, the coding frame is presented with some concrete examples.

4.3.1 Building the Coding Frame

The first attempt to build the coding frame started with reading through the party platforms of the post-Cold War era. The whole party platform documents were then entered into the analysis tool Atlas.ti. Starting with the 1992 party platforms, the sentences and paragraphs where a European actor, event, or policy was mentioned were systematically marked as coding units. One unit at a time, the main categories and their sub-categories were created. The coding frame was strictly data-driven because it was formed one code at a time during the process of coding.

Because there was no clear idea of the structure of the coding frame beforehand, new codes kept appearing as the analysis advanced. Sometimes the logic of the codes or coding units had to be changed when the analysis got further. Some cases were coded one way in the earlier platforms, but once encountered again, it became evident that they should be coded in a different way, for instance to prevent a mix-up with another code. If a similar coding unit had appeared in the previous party platforms, it was necessary to go back and change the codes.

After coding the party platforms between 1992 and 2000, the coding frame had become many pages long. It was very detailed and layered with several levels of sub-codes. For

instance, there was a main category “actor”. One of the codes beneath it was “region”. That code was further divided in several sub-codes marking geographical areas such as “Eastern Europe”. Those sub-codes were further divided in codes marking individual countries, such as “Estonia”.

The detailed coding frame had three flaws. First, because of the several layers and sub-categories in the coding frame, the coding process had become very slow. It took a long time to apply all relevant codes and sub-codes in one coding unit. Second, the complexity of the coding frame exposed the coding process to errors. It was difficult to keep track of how the different sub-codes had been used in different party platforms. Third, the detailed coding frame did not reduce the contents of the party platforms enough. One of the main perks of qualitative content analysis is that it generalizes complex information to reveal larger patterns. Finally, there was no other option than to start from the beginning and plan the structure of the coding frame so that it would be less detailed.

In the second attempt to build the coding frame, a different kind of approach was taken. This time, the process began with reading through all the party platforms and marking all the sentences and paragraphs where Europe was mentioned. These sentences and paragraphs were then copied and pasted into new documents, creating one document per party platform. Finally, these new documents were entered into the Atlas.ti program. Because only the relevant parts of the party platforms were included in the documents, it was easier to get a bigger picture of how Europe appears in the party platforms.

The draft of the first attempt to build the coding frame was used as a structure for the new coding frame. This time, the coding frame was streamlined so that it would have no more than two levels: the main categories and the codes within them. In one main category, the codes were named after a suggestion in a book about transatlantic relations. Otherwise, the categories originated from the data. Due to its data-driven nature, the coding frame can be said to fulfill the validity requirement of Schreier (2012). The following sub-chapter will present the categories and codes in more detail.

Next, the text in the party platform documents was divided into coding units. One coding unit consists of something from a couple of words to a whole paragraph and it

handles one issue. Finally, the coding frame was applied to the text that had been divided into coding units. The coding frame had to be edited once again during the first round of coding but eventually, the structure seemed satisfactory.

After the first round, a reliability check was done by going through the codes and coding units again. This check made sure there were no inconsistencies in the way the coding frame was applied to the coding units throughout the whole dataset of 14 party platforms. Full reliability can be achieved only if two persons coded the data the same way, but a reliability check on two occasions over time is the only possibility for one person. Even though subjective interpretation cannot quite be ruled out, the coding frame can be said to fulfill the reliability requirement of Schreier (2012).

4.3.2 The Outline of the Coding Frame

In this sub-chapter, the outline of the coding frame is presented. After multiple revisions and edits, the structure of the coding frame ended up having six main categories with each of them containing three to ten codes. Four of the main categories answer the research question “what” is said about Europe in the party platforms. The remaining two of the main categories help to answer the research question “how” Europe is presented in the party platforms.

The four “what” main categories are Actor, Geography, Event, and Policy area. The first main category, Actor, contains four codes: Geographical location, NATO, Institutions other than NATO, and Person. The code Geographical location is used with those coding units that mention a European region, country, or city. The code NATO is used when the North Atlantic Treaty Organization is mentioned. The code Institutions other than NATO is used with European institutions or treaties, such as the European Union, the G-7, or the Paris Agreement. The code Person is used when a European person is mentioned, such as the Russian president Vladimir Putin, the Serbian war criminal Slobodan Milosevic, or English author William Shakespeare.

The second main category, Geography, contains seven codes. With two exceptions, the codes are named after the five European regions categorized by Forsberg and Herd

(2006). In their book, Forsberg and Herd (2006) divide Europe into five blocks that have different kinds of relationships to the US: 'Atlantic Europe', 'Core Europe', 'New Europe', 'Non-aligned Europe', and 'Periphery Europe'.

By Atlantic Europe, they mean countries like the UK, Netherlands, Denmark, and Portugal, that have traditionally had pro-American security policy attitudes. Core Europe consists of France, Germany, and Belgium. In the analysis, Greece and Turkey were marked under Core Europe because of their negative attitude towards the Iraq War. New Europe means the ten Central and Eastern European countries that joined NATO and the EU at the beginning of the new millennium. Non-aligned Europe refers to non-NATO countries who are in the EU: Finland, Sweden, Austria, Ireland, and Cyprus. Finally, Periphery Europe means those European countries that are not NATO or EU members, such as Bosnia, Serbia, Ukraine, the Vatican State, and Russia.

The two additional codes in the Geography category of the coding frame are Russia and Europe. Russia is assigned its own code detached from the rest of the Periphery Europe because it has such a central role in the party platforms. Besides, Russia is often mentioned in the party platforms in a different kind of way than the rest of the countries in Periphery Europe. Mentions of the Soviet Union were coded under Russia, if it is clear that Russia is meant – for instance, when Kremlin is mentioned. Otherwise, mentions of the Soviet Union are coded under Periphery Europe. Then, the code Europe was created because the party platform frequently mentioned the continent in general. Not specifying any particular region or country, and instead using the general expression Europe, is typical in American political and common language.

The third main category, Event, consists of seven codes. Three of them refer to history: the code Pre-Cold War History is used for example with mentions about the World Wars, and the code Cold War History marks the events that took place before the break-up of the Soviet Union. The code End of Cold War is used when the collapse of Soviet Union is mentioned in the party platforms. The next two codes are used with military or civil conflicts. The code Conflict in Europe is used for instance with the wars and military interventions in Bosnia and Kosovo, as well as the conflicts of Northern Ireland and Cyprus. The other code, Conflict outside of Europe, is used for instance with the

wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria, as well as the military intervention in Libya, whenever NATO or other European actors are mentioned alongside them.

The last two codes in the Event category are NATO enlargement and Disarmament. The first one is self-explanatory, but the second one was created after some consideration. The code Disarmament describes the process of scaling down military troops and armillary in Europe after the Cold War in a coordinated effort with Russia. It includes references to treaties about nuclear weapons, such as the START treaties. Even though the contents of disarmament changed over time, the term returned in the party platforms to refer to the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. The code Disarmament is used whenever a European actor was mentioned as a partner in the global proliferation efforts.

The fourth main category, Policy area, consists of six codes. It is the last main category that answers the “what” question: what is said about Europe in the party platforms? The six codes cover all the policy areas in relation to which Europe is mentioned in the party platforms. The first of the Policy codes is Defense and Military. It is used with those coding units that mention a military conflict, intervention, or NATO. The second Policy code is called Non-Military Security. It is used together with frozen conflicts, such as the conflicts in Northern Ireland and Cyprus, with the general notion that the security of Europe is linked to the security of America. It includes mentions of anti-Semitic violence in Europe or Russia threatening cybersecurity.

The third Policy code is Democracy. It is used to label the coding units that describe American public diplomacy through international broadcasting in communist countries, the development of the societies of the former Soviet Union into democracies in the 1990s, as well as the situation of human rights and free press in Russia. The fourth Policy code is Economy, Trade, and Innovations. Coding units marked with this code contain references to the development of market economy in the former communist countries, trade relations to Russia and the European Union, as well as American private investment in Northern Ireland, to name a few.

The fifth of the Policy codes is Climate, Energy, and Environment. It is used for example in reference to cooperation with European actors to tackle climate change,

Europe as a good example of investments in clean tech, or the Soviet Union as a bad example in environmental protection. The sixth and last Policy code is Health and Social. It is used for references to a tuberculosis pandemic in Eastern Europe, global cooperation to combat HIV/AIDS, and Obamacare as a negative example of introducing European style bureaucracy in the USA.

The fifth and sixth main category are designed to answer the “how” question: how is Europe portrayed in the party platforms? The main categories are Interpretation and the Role of the European actor. The main category Interpretation helps to analyze the general tone of the mentions about Europe. The category consists of three codes: Positive, Neutral, and Negative. The codes ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ are given only to those coding units that could be characterized as strongly positive or negative. If the coding units are neutral or had both positive and negative elements, they are coded as neutral.

The last main category, the Role of the European Actor, has ten codes. The purpose of this category is to shed light on how the European actors are framed in the party platforms. Four of the codes are negative: Europe as Bad Example, Conflict Zone, Rival, and Threat. European actors are characterized as Bad Examples for instance when the European NATO allies are accused of not spending enough on defense, or when the general taxation level in Europe is considered too high. The code Conflict Zone is used with European actors suffering from a conflict, such as the former Yugoslavian territories. The code Rival is used for instance when the European Union is accused of being an unfair trading partner because of their agricultural subsidies. The code Threat is almost exclusively used with Russia when it can be interpreted as endangering American security.

Three codes are neutral: Europe as Object of Declining Importance, Object of US Aid, and Neutral. The code Object of Declining Importance is used for instance when the party platforms contain something about the US withdrawing troops from Europe. The code Object of US Aid is used for example when the party platforms demand America to help build democracy in the former communist countries or represent American military presence in Europe as a necessity for maintaining security on the continent. The code Neutral is used only when no other code is suitable.

The last three of the codes are positive: Europe as Ally, Cooperation Partner, and Good Example. The code Ally is used in a military context: European NATO members are characterized as allies. The code Cooperation Partner implies a less tight collaboration towards a common goal, for instance with Russia as a partner in nuclear disarmament. Finally, European actors are coded as Good Examples when the party platforms praise the development of former communist countries into capitalist democracies, or admire European countries for their economic growth based on clean tech.

The whole coding frame is attached in the Appendix. In the next sub-chapter, the results of the coding process are presented. The analysis shows what the codes reveal about the contents of the party platforms and how they describe the Democratic and Republican policies towards Europe in the post-Cold War era.

5 Research Results

This chapter begins with an overview of the style and length of the Democratic and Republican party platforms between 1992 and 2016. After that, the findings of the qualitative content analysis are displayed. The analysis is divided into four parts: the general tone of the party platforms, the appearance of the different policy areas, the distribution of European actors, and the roles of the European regions and institutions in the party platforms.

5.1 Overview of the Party Platforms – Differences in Style and Length

The Republican and Democratic party platforms between 1992 and 2016 are different in style and thus in length as well. At their best, the Republican party platforms are over twice as long as the Democratic party platforms. It is mainly because the style of the Republican platforms is more detailed. They single out countries, supreme court decisions, or even specific people by name. Moreover, they contain quotes from the Republican presidential candidate and former Republican presidents. The language is rhetorically skilled, and often resembles a political speech more than a policy paper. Finally, the Republican party platforms have long paragraphs about the Constitution and about traditional values close to the Republican party ideology.

In contrast, the Democratic party platforms are more concise in their style. They have less detailed examples than their Republican counterparts. More often, they remain on the general level especially in the foreign policy. What is common for both Democratic and Republican party platforms, is that whenever an incumbent president is running for re-election, the party platform of the incumbent party resembles a report of the achievements of the incumbent administration rather than a forward-looking policy paper. In contrast, the party platform of the challenger party accuses the incumbent president of low economic growth and all kinds of failures and negative developments. All in all, at times it seems that the Republican and Democratic party platforms have not only contrasting values and policy suggestions, but also a contrasting factual base.

The trends in the length of the party platforms have varied over time and are different in the two parties. On average, the Republican party platforms are 58 pages long. Between 1992 and 2004, the trend in the Republican party platforms was that they became longer and longer. At their peak in 2004, the Republican party platform was 75 pages long. In the next elections in 2008, the Republican party platform was reduced to 47 pages, a record-low in the post-Cold War era. Since then, the length of the party platform has started to grow again.

In comparison, the average length of the Democratic party platforms is 35 pages. The shortest Democratic party platform in the post-Cold War era was the 1992 party platform with its 16 pages. Between 1992 and 2000, the Democratic party platforms became longer and longer. The 2004 party platform was again shorter, but the growing trend continued in the 2008 party platform that was 44 pages long, a record-high in the post-Cold War era. Since then, the length of the Democratic party platforms has remained at that level.

The differences in the length of the party platforms impact the comparative analysis of them. In most of the elections, the Republican party platform was significantly longer than the Democratic party platform. Only in 2008, the party platforms of the two parties were of almost the same length. During those elections, the Republicans wrote their shortest party platform of this era with 47 pages, whereas the Democrats wrote their longest party platform of this era with 44 pages. Therefore, it is not possible to compare the party platforms directly. That is why the absolute numbers in the analysis have been converted into percentages so that a comparison would become more relevant.

The comparison in percentages is relevant when looking at the number of pages about Europe in the party platforms. To make this comparison possible in the first place, all sentences and paragraphs where Europe was mentioned were copied and pasted into one new document per party platform. If one compared the mere number of pages about Europe between the two parties, it would only show that the Republican party platforms contain more references to Europe than the Democratic party platforms. To tackle this problem, the information was converted into percentages: what is the share of the pages about Europe in relation to the total number of pages in the party platform? In addition

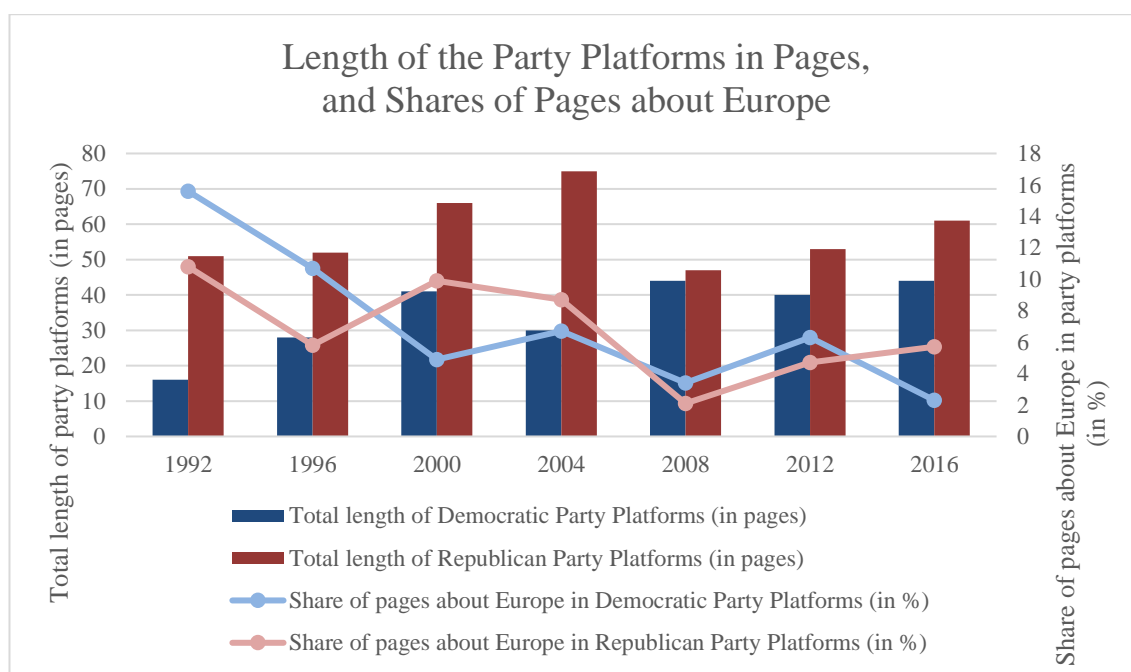
to making the comparison between the two parties possible, it makes the comparison within a party over time more relevant.

The share of pages about Europe can be interpreted as a reflection of the importance of Europe for the American parties. In the post-Cold War era between 1992 and 2016, the trend is clear: Europe has become less significant for the American parties. The average share of pages about Europe was over 13% in the 1992 party platforms. In 2016, the average share of pages about Europe was only 4%.

In Democratic party platforms, the fall in the share of pages about Europe has been sharp: from almost 16% in the 1992 Democratic party platform to just over 2% in the 2016 Democratic party platform. Only in 2004 and 2012 was the share a little higher than in the previous party platform, but they could not reverse the declining trend. In the Republican party platforms, the fall has not been so sharp. From the 1992 Republican party platform with its 11% share of pages about Europe to 2008 with its 2% share about Europe, the trend was in decline. The only exception was a significant rise in the share in the 2000 Republican party platform. Since 2008, the trend in the Republican party platforms has reversed. The share of pages about Europe has had a minor but steady increase in the 2012 and 2016 Republican party platforms, the share being close to 6% in the 2016 Republican party platform.

When looking at the data about the share of pages about Europe in the party platforms, an interesting fact can be noticed. In the post-Cold War era, the presidential election has always been won by the party who had a larger share of pages about Europe in their party platform. In 1992 and 1996, when Clinton won the elections, Democrats had a larger share of Europe in their party platforms. In 2000 and 2004, Republicans had a larger share of Europe in their party platforms, and Bush won the elections. In 2008 and 2012, the trend continued with Obama winning the elections and the Democrats having proportionally more about Europe in their party platforms. Finally, in 2016, Republicans outnumbered Democrats in their share about Europe in the party platforms, and Trump won the elections. Even though a causal relation is doubtful, it will be interesting to see if this logic will continue in the 2020 presidential elections.

The lengths of the party platforms in pages as well as the share of pages about Europe is depicted in a graph below. These two elements are combined in the same graph to visualize the fact that the share of pages about Europe in the party platform is not dependent on the length of the party platform.



Graph 1. *Length of the party platforms in pages, and their shares of pages about Europe.*

To conclude, the Republican and Democratic party platforms between 1992 and 2016 are different in style and in length. The trends in the length of the party platforms have varied over time and are different in the two parties. At their best, the Republican party platforms are over two times longer than the Democratic party platforms. The differences in the length of the party platforms make a comparative analysis between the party platforms difficult. That is why the absolute numbers in this and the following chapters have been converted into percentages in the analysis so that a comparison would become more relevant. Furthermore, the share of pages about Europe in the party platforms can be interpreted as a reflection of the importance of Europe for the American parties. In the post-Cold War era between 1992 and 2016, the trend is clear: Europe has become less significant for the American parties.

5.2 Differences between the Democratic and Republican Party Platforms

Because the length of the party platforms was so different between the parties, a comparison in absolute numbers would not be informative. Instead, the results have been changed into percentages. The analysis of the results begins with showing the general tone of the party platforms: whether the contents can be interpreted as being positive, neutral, or negative towards Europe. The second sub-chapter is about the appearance of the different policy areas in the party platforms' text extracts about Europe. The third sub-chapter introduces the distribution of the four coding groups of European actors that were singled out in the party platforms: Geographical location, NATO, Institutions other than NATO, and Person. Finally, the last sub-chapter will look at how the roles of the European regions and institutions are portrayed in the party platforms.

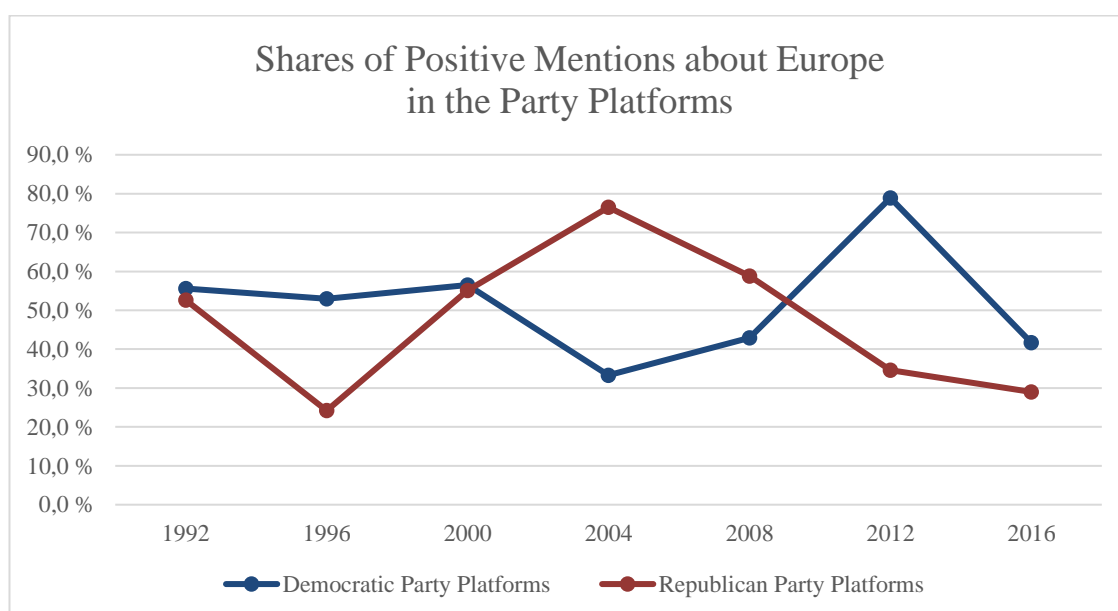
5.2.1 General Tone of the Party Platforms

This analysis begins with showing the general tone of the party platforms: whether the contents can be interpreted as being positive, neutral, or negative towards Europe. The results show that in general, Europe was mentioned in an either clearly positive or clearly negative tone. On average, Democratic party platforms depicted Europe more positively than the Republican party platforms: the share of positive mentions was 52% in the Democratic party platforms against the share of 47% in the Republican party platforms. However, the trend is declining. The 2016 party platforms were the first ones where both parties were more negative than positive towards Europe: only 42% of the mentions in the Democratic party platform were positive, and an even lower share of 29% was positive in the Republican party platform.

In addition, there are significant changes in the positivity over time within the parties. It seems that the party of the incumbent president is generally more content about Europe than the challenging party. The 1992 platforms make an exception to the rule, with the Democratic party platform having a larger share of positive mentions about Europe. After President Clinton's terms in 1996 and 2000, Democrats were more positive towards Europe than the Republicans. The trend turned upside down after President

Bush's terms in 2004 and 2008, with Republicans being more content with Europe. After President Obama's terms in 2012 and 2016, the trend reversed again, with Democrats being significantly more positive towards Europe.

The differences are most noticeable during the elections where the incumbent president is running for his second term: in 1996, 2004, and 2012. This trend could be explained by the logic of party platforms: when the incumbent president is running, the party platform of the incumbent praises his policies. Vice versa, the party platform of the challenging candidate tries to show the policy failures of the opposing party's incumbent president.

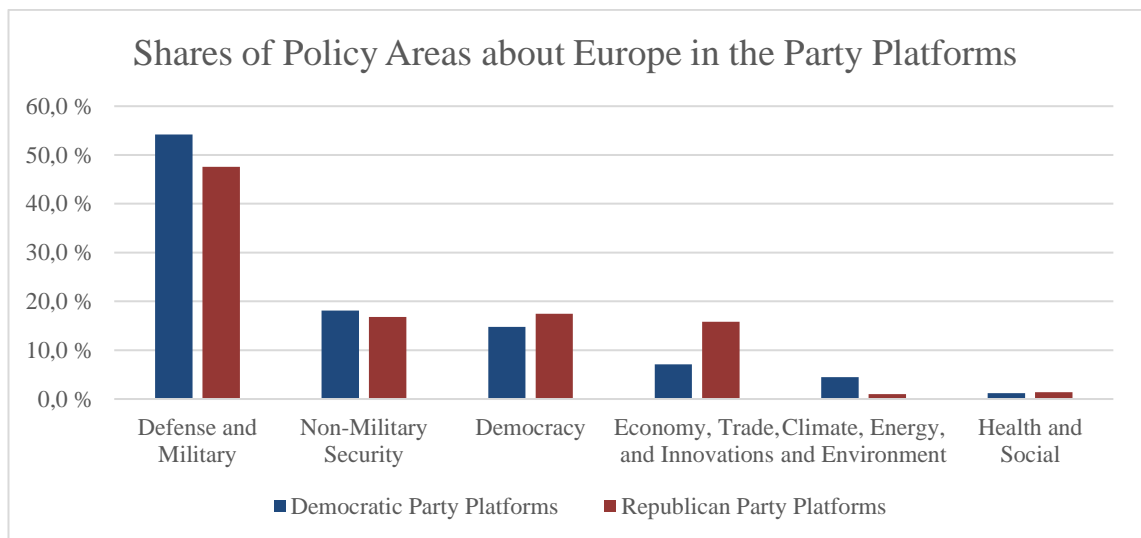


Graph 2. *The shares of positive mentions about Europe in the party platforms.*

5.2.2 Policy Areas in the Party Platforms

This sub-chapter is about the appearance of the different policy areas in the party platforms' text extracts about Europe. The most common policy area in both parties' platforms is Defense and Military. It accounts for more than half of all policies in the Democratic party platforms and for almost half of the policies in the Republican party platforms. The next largest policy areas were Non-Military Security followed by Democracy in the Democratic party platforms, and the same categories but in reversed order in the Republican platforms.

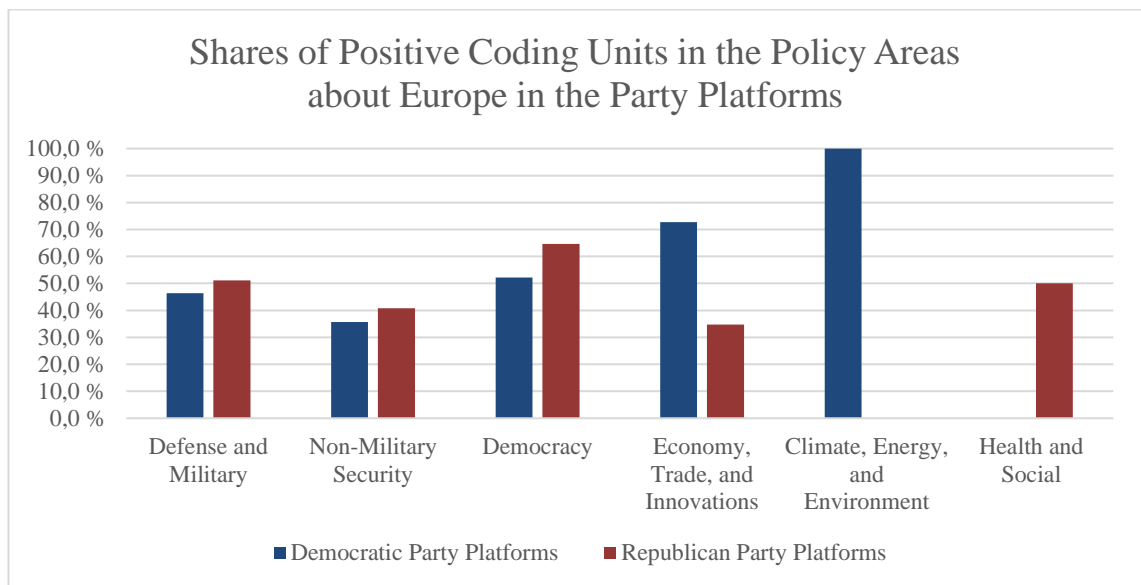
The biggest difference is in the policy area Economy, Trade, and Innovations which has a more than two times larger share in the Republican party platforms than in the Democratic platforms. In contrast, the policy area Climate, Energy, and Environment has a five times larger share in the Democratic party platforms than in the Republican platforms. Finally, the smallest policy area, Health and Social, accounts for an equally minor share of all policies in both parties' platforms.



Graph 3. *The shares of policy areas about Europe in the party platforms.*

Furthermore, the share of positive coding units in each policy area was investigated. In the Defense and Military policy, Republican party platforms are more positive than the Democratic party platforms. In the Non-Military Security policy, the results are similar, but the positivity rates are lower. In the Democracy policy, the positivity scores are higher among both parties. Again, Republican party platforms have a higher positivity rate in Democracy policy than the Democratic party platforms.

Now for the biggest differences in the tone of positivity in different policy areas. In the Economy, Trade, and Innovations policy, the Democratic party platforms are twice as positive as the Republican platforms. The same trend continues in Climate, Energy, and Environment policy: none of the Republican coding units are positive whereas all of the Democratic coding units are positive. In Health and Social policy, half of the Republican coding units were positive whereas none of the Democratic coding units were.



Graph 4. *The shares of positive coding units in the policy areas about Europe in the party platforms.*

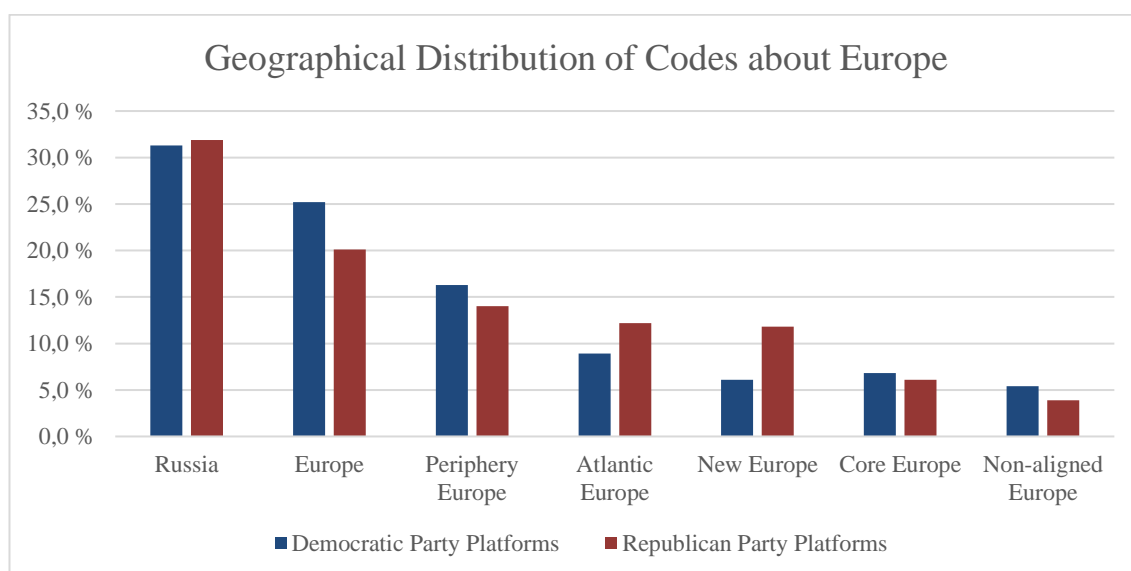
5.2.3 European Actors in the Party Platforms

This sub-chapter introduces the distribution of four coding groups of European actors that were singled out in the party platforms: Geographical location, NATO, Institutions other than NATO, and Person. Most of the actors were Geographical locations: almost 80% of the actors in the Republican party platforms and over 70% of the actors in the Democratic party platforms. The next most common actor was NATO with an almost 20% share of the Democratic actors and an over 10% share of the Republican actors. Then came Institutions other than NATO with a 7% share in both parties' platforms, and finally Person with a 2% share in both parties' platforms.

To conclude, the biggest difference between the party platforms seems to be the fact that the Republicans mention more countries by name than the Democrats. In addition, the Democrats mention NATO proportionally more often than the Republicans. These results are related to each other: Republicans were more eager to single out their NATO allies and new NATO members by name than the Democrats.

In what follows, the geographical distribution of the mentions of European actors between the Democratic and Republican parties is investigated. One can see that the results are rather similar among both parties' platforms: Russia gets one third of the mentions, after that comes "Europe" in general, and then Periphery Europe.

However, there are differences as well. "Europe" in general is mentioned more often in the Democratic than the Republican platforms. Moreover, the Republican party platforms mention the allies of the United States more often than the Democratic platforms. Both Atlantic Europe and New Europe have larger shares in the Republican platforms than in the Democratic platforms. However, Core Europe and Non-aligned Europe have larger shares in Democratic than Republican party platforms.



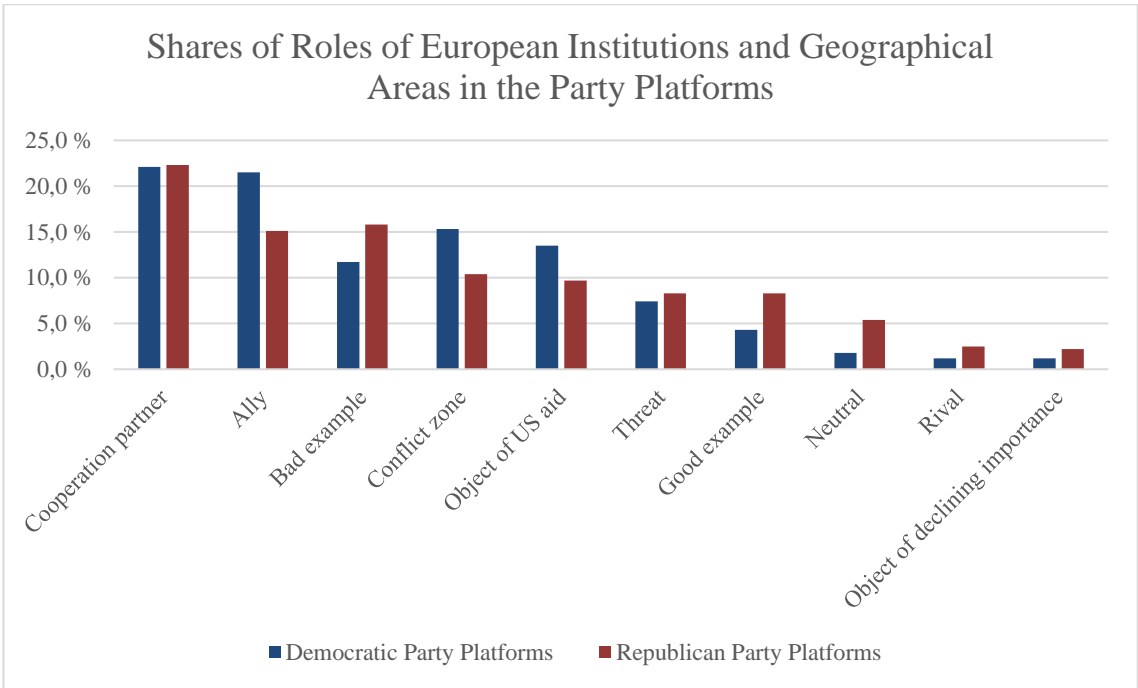
Graph 5. *The geographical distribution of codes about Europe in the party platforms.*

5.2.4 Roles of the European Actors in the Party Platforms

Next, this sub-chapter will look into how the roles of the European actors are portrayed in the American party platforms of the post-Cold War era. The sub-chapter starts with presenting the results in general. Then, the results regarding NATO and Institutions other than NATO are laid out. Finally, the focus will be on the findings in the two most common geographical areas: Russia, and Europe in general.

The beginning of this section of the analysis provides a bigger picture of how European regions and institutions are framed in the party platforms. The most common role of the European actors in both parties' platforms is Cooperation partner, which accounts for over one fifth of mentions among both parties. Even the next four most common roles are same among both parties, although the order is somewhat different: Ally, Bad example, Conflict zone, and Object of US aid.

However, there are differences as well. Among Democratic party platforms, European actors are portrayed as Ally, Conflict zone, and Object of US aid more often than in the Republican party platforms. In contrast, the Republican party platforms view European actors as Bad example, Good example, Neutral, and Rival more often than the Democratic platforms. The shares of the rest of the roles are nearly equal among the parties: Threat and Object of declining importance.

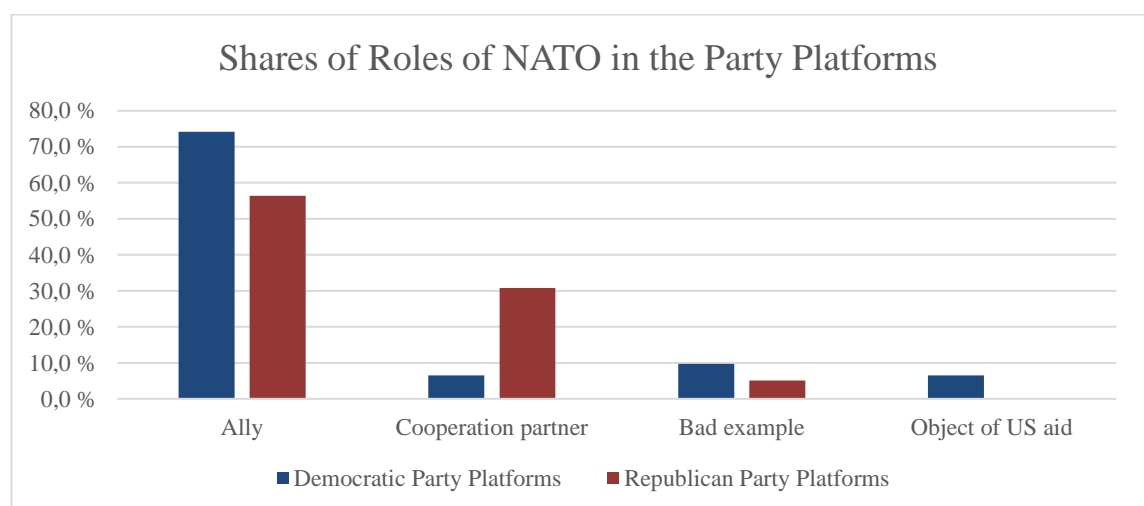


Graph 6. *The shares of roles of European institutions and geographical areas in the party platforms.*

In what follows, the roles of the institutions and the roles of the two most common geographical locations, Russia and Europe, are presented in more detail.

First, there are differences in how the two parties view NATO's role. In both party platforms, NATO is mostly framed as an Ally. However, the share of NATO as an Ally is more common in Democratic platforms than in Republican platforms. The difference is explained by the Republicans viewing NATO as a Cooperation partner more often than the Democrats. The distinction between the two roles means that the Republicans consider NATO only as a Cooperation partner. If they so decide, they can act differently than the rest of the NATO countries. In contrast, the Democrats stress the supranational nature of NATO in a way that suggests that if NATO as an organization decides something, the US as one of the members will abide by the decision.

Furthermore, NATO's role is portrayed as a Bad example two times more often in Democratic platforms than in Republican platforms. Both parties use this role when they accuse the European NATO allies of not investing as much in their military as the NATO membership would require them to. Finally, NATO as an Object of US aid gets an almost one in tenth share in the Democratic party platforms against no mentions in the Republican platforms. This is because only the Democrats mention the NATO's Article 5 and promise to protect their European NATO allies if one of them is attacked. This common defense clause is also mentioned in the Republican party platforms, only vice versa, in the context of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the US in 2001.

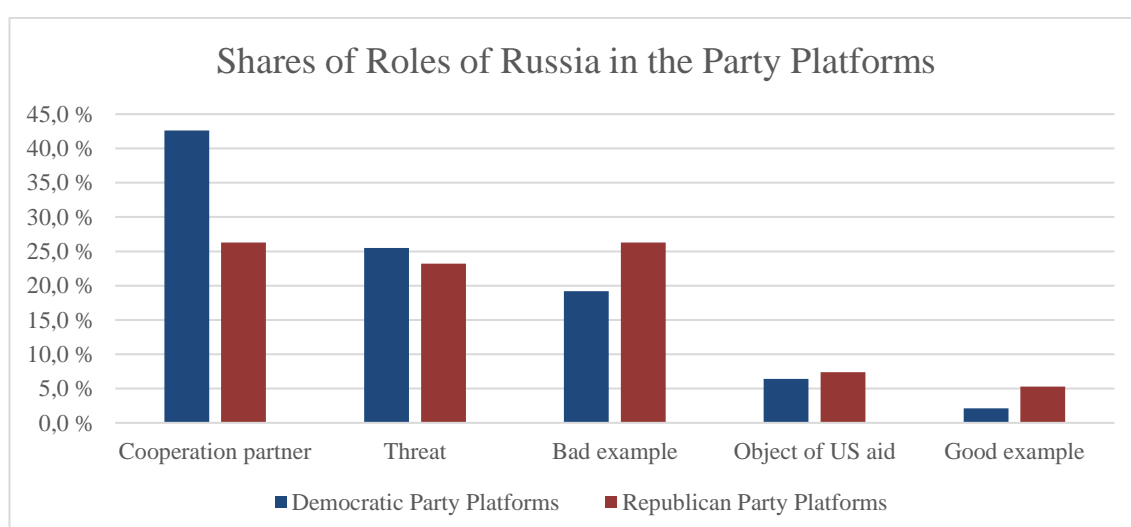


Graph 7. *The shares of roles of NATO in the party platforms.*

Second, the institutions other than NATO, most often the European Union, are framed as Cooperation partners in more than half of the mentions both in Democratic party

platforms and Republican party platforms. However, there are some differences as well. In Republican party platforms, institutions are portrayed as Rivals in one fifth of the mentions against no such mention in Democratic party platforms. In Democratic party platforms, institutions are framed as Good example two times more often than in Republican party platforms.

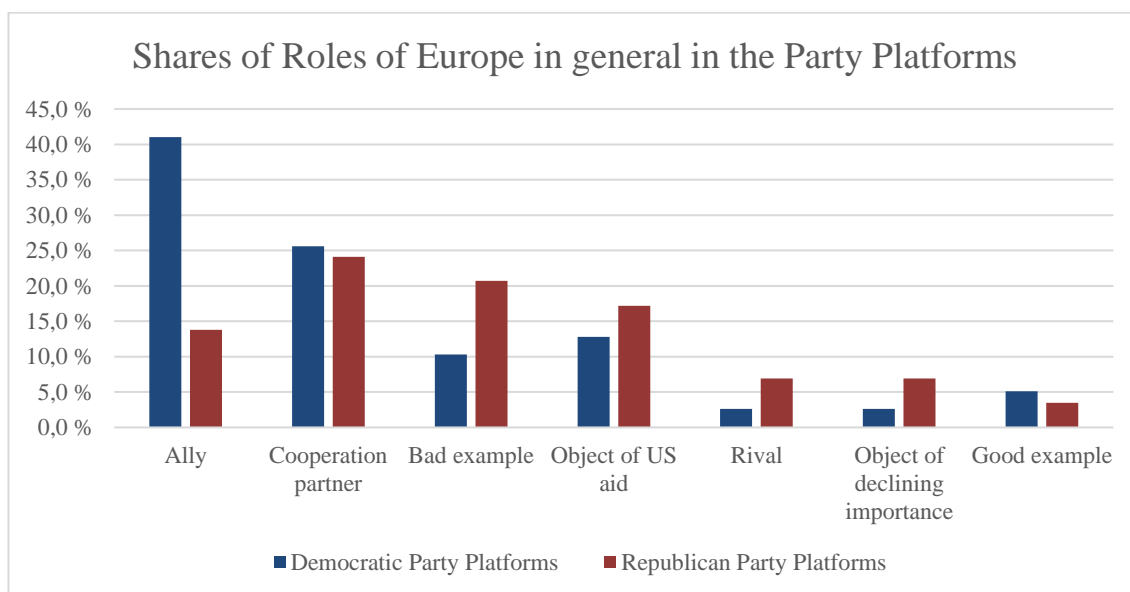
Third, the role of Russia in the party platforms is somewhat different between the parties. In general, the Democratic party platforms frame Russia in more positive roles than the Republican party platforms. The most common role for Russia is Cooperation partner with almost half of the mentions in Democratic platforms against only one fourth in Republican platforms. Another common role for Russia in both party platforms is Threat with a share of one fourth in both Democratic and Republican party platforms. Bad example, on the other hand, is a more common role for Russia in Republican than Democratic party platforms. Finally, Object of US aid is an equally common role in both parties' platforms, and Good example is somewhat more common in Republican platforms.



Graph 8. *The shares of roles of Russia in the party platforms.*

Fourth, the roles of Europe in general are mostly positive, but there are also differences between the parties. The most common role for Europe is Ally with a three times larger share in Democratic than in Republican party platforms. It signals that the Democrats have a tighter relationship to Europe than the Republicans. The next most common role for Europe is Cooperation partner which has a one in fourth share in both parties'

platforms. Republican party platforms frame Europe in general in more negative roles: Europe as a Bad example has a two times larger share in Republican platforms than in Democratic platforms. Moreover, Europe as an Object of US aid, as a Rival, and as an Object of declining importance are more common in Republican party platforms. Finally, Europe is mentioned as a Good example more often in Democratic than in Republican platforms.



Graph 9. *The shares of roles of Europe in general in the party platforms.*

6 Discussion

The two main approaches in the analysis are comparison over time and comparison between the parties. In this chapter, the results of the main research questions of the thesis are analyzed:

1. *How and why do the Democrats' and the Republicans' policies towards Europe change over time?*
2. *How and why do the policies towards Europe differ between the Democrats and the Republicans?*

In the first sub-chapter, the impact of domestic power politics and events in international politics on changes in policies will be discussed. In the second sub-chapter, the party platforms of the respective parties are compared from a time perspective to find out if any ideological change can be detected within a party. In the third sub-chapter, the contents of the party platforms are compared between the two parties to reveal policy and ideological differences between the parties.

6.1 The Impact of Domestic Power Politics and Events in International Politics

The hypothesis of this thesis was that intraparty ideological change over time can be detected through the analysis. It was expected that the developments of domestic and international politics would have affected the policies and ideological tone of the respective parties over time. Looking at the data on the general tone of mentions about Europe in the platforms, there are significant changes in the positivity rates within the parties over time. These changes can be explained by outside circumstances and events.

The variation in the positivity rates within a party over time could be explained by the fact that the candidates were different and thus the platforms were written by different people. However, there is variation in the tone even though the candidate remained the same. The analysis revealed a clear pattern: the party of the incumbent president is generally more positive towards Europe than the challenging party. This trend could be explained by the logic of party platforms: when the incumbent president is running, the

party platform of the incumbent praises his policies. Vice versa, the party platform of the challenging candidate tries to show the policy failures of the opposing party's incumbent president.

In conclusion, the "incumbency factor" seems to explain the variation within the parties over time. This is showcased in the fact that the 2012 Democratic party platform of President Obama is much more positive than the 2008 Democratic party platform of Senator Obama. The difference is over 30%-units. A similar jump of over 20%-units can be detected between the positivity rates from the 2000 Republican party platform of Governor Bush to 2004 Republican party platform of President Bush.

What is more, it appears that international developments have had an impact on the general tone of the platforms. First, the Balkan wars in the 1990s were reflected especially in the 1996 Republican party platform that accused the Clinton administration of mishandling the crisis and intervention. In the 1996 Republican party platform, the positivity rate dropped from over 50% in the 1992 platform to a record low: less than 25% of the mentions about Europe were positive.

Second, the Iraq War that started in 2003 had an impact on both parties' platforms' tones. On the Republican side, the positivity rate rose from around 55% in the 2000 platform to nearly 80% in the 2004 platform. The Republican 2004 platform praised the European countries, especially in Eastern Europe, who had joined the US as allies in the Iraq War. Additionally, the Republican platform triumphed the Eastern expansion of NATO in 2004. In contrast, the positivity rate on the Democratic side dropped from over 55% in the 2000 platform to less than 35% in the 2004 platform. The 2004 Democratic platform accused the Bush administration of acting unilaterally and causing an unprecedented crisis in transatlantic relations through refusing to listen to half of their NATO allies in Europe. Moreover, the Democratic platform was worried that the Bush administration's unilateral and belittling policy towards Russia would cause more harm in the future.

Third, the dispute between unilateralism and multilateralism was to become another major turning point that explains the changes in the tones from the 2008 party platforms to the 2012 party platforms. During their first term, the Obama administration had

focused on regaining trust and repairing relations to all European allies and international institutions such as the UN and NATO. Relations to Russia were another focal point: the Obama administration became famous for their “reset” policy and treated Russia as a potential and equal partner in international politics. Having focused mainly on domestic issues in 2008 with a positivity rate of mentions about Europe at just over 40%, the Democratic party platform of 2012 had more contents about Europe, and a significant jump in the positivity rate up to nearly 80%. In contrast, the positivity rate of the Republican party platform dropped from nearly 60% in the 2008 platform down to 35% in the 2012 platform. They would have preferred continuing with more unilateral politics and a tougher attitude towards Russia.

Fourth, there was a significant fall in the positivity rate of the Democratic party platform from nearly 80% in 2012 down to 40% in 2016. The main reason was the war in Ukraine. The positivity towards Russia had all but disappeared because of the invasion on Crimea. Furthermore, the 2016 Democratic party platform paints a picture of the Republican candidate Trump as being a friend of the Russian president Putin, one of the “new great enemies” of the US. Additionally, Europe was once again an active warzone. The escalating civil war in Syria had also caused a flow of refugees to Europe.

6.2 The Impact of Ideological Change

In addition to the impact of domestic circumstances and events in international politics, there are ideological changes within the parties over time. The theoretical background of the thesis is based on two pillars: Mead’s four traditional schools of foreign policy (2001) and Gries’ five foreign policy profiles for Democrats and Republicans (2014). A shortcoming of this thesis is that most of the foreign policy texts in the party platforms are not about Europe and thus cannot be included in the analysis. Besides, the text extracts about Europe are not only about foreign policy, so the theoretical background cannot be applied to all the analyzed data. Because of these restrictions by the data, Mead’s traditional schools of foreign policy are difficult to recognize in the party platforms. However, there is enough material to point out how Gries’ different foreign policy profiles and orientations can be detected in the party platforms.

6.2.1 Foreign Policy Profiles in the Democratic Party Platforms

Gries (2014) distinguishes three different foreign policy profiles among the Democratic party: forceful idealists, global citizens, and skeptics. In his theory, the Democratic party elites are rather evenly divided among these profiles. The profile forceful idealism is the most common, but global citizenship and skepticism are not trailing far behind. The Democratic party platforms were analyzed with regards to how these foreign policy profiles can be detected in their text extracts about Europe. Surprisingly, it was found out that all seven party platforms show traits of the profile forceful idealism.

In this sub-chapter, the most important policy orientations that characterize the policy profiles will be introduced. Then, some examples in the party platforms that show how the platforms can be said to belong to the policy profile forceful idealism will be pointed out. In addition, it is shown that there are some differences in the degree of how strongly the policy orientations appear in each platform.

The policy orientation multilateralism is strong in the Democratic platforms: they show respect to the US being a member of international institutions and stress the importance of negotiating policy with allies. Having high scores in the policy orientation political idealism, the Democratic party platforms are eager to protect, promote, and spread democracy in Europe and around the world. Moreover, humanitarianism can be detected in all Democratic platforms because they want to protect human rights in Europe and around the world with the help of European allies. Finally, isolationism does not appear in the Democratic party platforms. On the contrary, active foreign policy is a key feature in all of them.

What distinguishes forceful idealists from global citizens is how prepared they are to use military force to defend democracy and human rights overseas. All the Democratic party platforms show more or less preparedness in committing military interventions and operations to protect these values. Another difference between the two foreign policy profiles is the degree of nationalism. Global citizens act for the general good, whereas the forceful idealists justify their actions as being vital for the American

security and national interest. There are differences in the degree of nationalism even between the Democratic party platforms. However, none of them depict the strongest form of nationalism: claims about American superiority over all other nations.

The 1992 Democratic party platform seems to fit the category forceful idealism, but there are some traits of the global citizenship profile as well. The platform urges the US together with its allies to support emerging democracies in Eastern Europe more decisively than the current Bush administration had done. What is more, the platform expresses humanitarian concerns about the conflict in Bosnia and demands the US to react. Even religious idealism can be detected in the concern for Soviet Jews. However, in the wake of the Cold War, the platform stresses the importance of scaling down military commitments in Europe. All in all, the platform seems to recommend diplomacy over the use of military force.

The 1996 Democratic party platform takes a step towards forceful idealism because it praises the military intervention in Bosnia. Furthermore, the platform is enthusiastic about multilateral cooperation through NATO and about the new role of NATO as a peacekeeper around the world. The upcoming NATO enlargement is another reason for optimism about the importance of a military alliance. Additionally, political idealism about spreading democracy as well as humanitarianism are reflected throughout the platform: not only in Eastern Europe, but also together with European allies around the world. Cultural diplomacy through broadcasting is mentioned as one means to achieve this. Nationalism, however, is a policy orientation that seems to be missing from the 1996 Democratic party platform. That is characteristic for global citizenship: the actions are legitimized based on general good, not national interests.

The 2000 Democratic party platform is the clearest example of forceful idealism so far. As a contrast to the party platforms of the 1990s, this party platform shows features of both military force and nationalism. Promotion of democracy and human rights are still key features of the platform but this time, the reason for action is American national interest and military force can be used as means to achieve these goals. Multilateralism is the foundation of foreign policy, which can be seen for instance in the respect towards NATO allies. What is new, is that Russia is seen in the platform as a potential partner

that shall be respected and treated as an equal for example in the negotiations about nuclear disarmament and missile defense.

The 2004 Democratic party platform is another clear-cut example of the profile forceful idealism. However, this time it is centered around the policy orientation of multilateralism. The platform accuses the Bush administration of disrespecting and abandoning many of their European allies when unilaterally starting the war in Iraq. As a contrast, the Democratic party platform stresses that the US can take a lead in world politics but only through respecting, listening to, and acting together with their allies instead of going alone. Besides, they want the US to repair the transatlantic relations and to commit to international treaties. Otherwise, the platform has a similar focus on political idealism through diplomacy and military force, that promotes peace and democracy around the world, as the 2000 Democratic platform. It is seen as beneficial for both the world in general, as well as for the American national interest. In nationalist tones, the platform wants the US to once again become the widely respected ally and superpower in world politics, that they were in the 20th century.

The 2008 Democratic party platform continues the tradition of forceful idealism. As in the previous platform, multilateralism is a key feature. The 2008 platform wants to fix Transatlantic relations, strengthen ties to allies, and commit to international institutions and treaties. In addition to conventional threats, climate change and severe diseases are mentioned as something the US must act upon together with their allies. Diplomacy is in the center of American strategy with friends and foes: for instance, uniting with Europe to launch sanctions towards Iran. However, military force is seen as another possible means to reach humanitarian and political idealist goals. As a proof of this, the platform demands more American investments into NATO. The alliance is seen as an important forum for peacekeeping in Europe and elsewhere in the world. In the 2008 Democratic party platform, nationalism has made room for collegial responsibility.

The 2012 Democratic party platform is another case in point continuing the tradition of forceful idealism. Multilateralism, military force, and political idealism are central policy orientations in the platform. An international climate treaty is being demanded. The platform praises the Obama administration for recovering relations to European allies. What is more, there is plenty of optimism around the US-Russia relationship:

new kind of cooperation blooms both in trade, nuclear disarmament, joint sanctions against Iran, and the new ballistic-missile defense system in Europe. NATO allies are thanked for a joint successful intervention in Libya. Finally, the platform underlines that the US will maintain the NATO Article 5 collective security commitment to defend their allies. To sum up, the 2012 Democratic party platform seems to give more room for military force than the previous platform.

The 2016 Democratic party platform is concise about Europe, but characteristics of forceful idealism can still be detected. Multilateralism, humanitarianism, military force, and political idealism appear in the platform. The importance of sticking to international treaties and cooperating with allies to keep peace and promote democracy is evident in the platform. Additionally, American relations to Russia have become worse because of the war in Ukraine. The Democratic platform accuses the Republican candidate Trump of favoring Russia over NATO allies. As a contrast, the Democrats repeat their pledge to uphold NATO Article 5 to show they are committed to protect their European allies. Once again, global responsibility seems to rise over nationalism. As a proof, the platform demands the US to help Europe and the rest of the world share the burden of the refugee crisis, even though the crisis does not touch the US directly.

6.2.2 Foreign Policy Profiles in the Republican Party Platforms

Gries (2014) claims that there are two kinds of foreign policy profiles among the Republicans: cautious idealists and isolationist skeptics. Gries argues that the distribution among the Republican party elites is two-thirds cautious idealists and one-third isolationist skeptics. Having analyzed the Republican party platforms with regards to how these foreign policy profiles can be detected in their text extracts about Europe, the results of the analysis seem to support that argument. It appears that out of the seven Republican party platforms in the post-Cold War era, four lean towards cautious idealists and three towards isolationist skeptics.

In this sub-chapter, the most important policy orientations that characterize the policy profiles will be introduced. Then, some examples in the party platforms that show how the platforms can be said to belong to the cautious idealists and isolationist skeptics

policy profiles will be pointed out. In addition, it is shown that there are some differences in how strongly the policy orientations appear in each platform.

In general, the three strongest policy orientations in the Republican party platforms are unilateralism, military force, and nationalism. First, the Republican party platforms distinctively point out that the US shall not be bound by international treaties that do not serve their interests, or by collective decisions taken by international organizations. Second, the importance of a strong military capacity stands out in the platforms. Third, there is a more or less straight-forward belief in American superiority and American interests over global interests in every Republican party platform.

The policy orientations that vary from platform to platform are isolationism, political idealism, and humanitarianism. Active foreign policy is part of most Republican party platforms, but not all of them. Most party platforms are keen on promoting democracy and free trade around the world just for the general good. Some of them even encourage the US to defend human rights globally, even though there is no obvious national interest behind it. Finally, religious idealism appears to be a subtle side-note in almost all of the Republican platforms.

The 1992 Republican party platform has clear characteristics of the policy profile cautious idealism: nationalism, political idealism, and humanitarianism, together with military force and religious idealism. The platform celebrates the American victory in the Cold War through declaring democracy's, capitalism's and America's superiority over dictatorship, communism, and the rest of the world. Political idealism can be detected in the goal to root democracy as well as a free market and trade ideology in Europe and to spread them around the world. Besides, humanitarianism appears in the concern for human rights violations in former Yugoslavia, and the preparedness to intervene to stop human rights violations around the world. Another interesting aim is to assist Eastern Europe to recover and protect their environment, as well as to invest globally to combat climate change. These actions are not justified based solely on American national interest, but rather on the general good.

The role of military force is not strong in the 1992 Republican party platform, but still stronger than in the Democratic equivalent. Because of the end of the Cold War, the

Republicans admit that military deployments in Europe shall be reduced. However, they accuse the Democrats for wanting to disable the military with their proposed cuts. Moreover, the Republicans plan building a new ballistic-missile defense system in Europe. Another distinction from the Democratic platform is that the Republicans want to have control over international politics unilaterally in American hands. An example of unilateralism is how the Republicans want to dictate how the nuclear disarmament of the former Soviet Union shall be completed, instead of negotiating this issue with Russia. However, a hint of multilateralism can be found in the commitment to the NATO alliance and their post-Cold War strategy that can be summarized as “leadership through partnership”. Finally, religious idealism appears in the platform in the concern for Soviet Jews.

As a contrast to the previous platform, the 1996 Republican party platform takes a sharp turn towards isolationist skepticism. The 1996 platform has some key characteristics of that profile: unilateralism, nationalism, and isolationism. Unilateralism appears in many ways: The Republican platform accuses the Clinton administration of putting the obedience to United Nations arms embargo ahead of America’s national interest in selling weapons to Bosnia. In addition, the Republican platform wants the US to withdraw from the international ABM treaty that prevents the US from acquiring a new missile defense system. American interests shall dictate the relations to Russia. To conclude, the Republican platform states that the US should only cooperate with their partners if it is in American interests. Additionally, nationalism appears as the belief in the superiority of capitalism and other American values. Finally, in the spirit of isolationism, the platform demands the US to withdraw troops from Bosnia, and in the future only to intervene if American security and interests are directly threatened.

The 2000 Republican party platform returns to the tradition of cautious idealism by reclaiming the need for an internationally active America. Political idealism is once again apparent in the plans to spread democracy, capitalism, and free trade around the world. The argument is nationalist: America is more prosperous and secure if the rest of the world follows that ideology. Military force and unilateralism are still high on the agenda. This can be seen for instance in the claims that the US should abandon all those international treaties that somehow limit their possibilities to invest in new weapons arsenal. According to the platform, the US-Russia relationship shall be based on

American interests only. The platform supports a militarily strong NATO alliance with more European members but stresses that the alliance consists of sovereign nations that must be allowed to act independently if they want to. In the spirit of nationalism and isolationism, the platform demands a withdrawal from the Balkans because the conflict does not threaten American security. Finally, the platform states that peace and democracy in Europe are supported by the US in spirit, but that no direct American involvement in Europe is needed.

The 2004 Republican party platform continues in the footsteps of cautious idealism. This time, military force is in the center of the platform because of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. NATO is held in high regard, especially the new member states from Eastern Europe. Even though the platform thanks international allies and partners that fight alongside them, in Iraq in particular, unilateralism is evidently present: the US shall lead, and partners may follow if they agree with the American strategy and goals. Surprisingly, Russia is no longer seen as an adversary, but as a potential partner in the War on Terror. As a concession towards multilateralism, the platform recognizes the importance of international organizations such as the UN and the WTO. What is more, the 2004 Republican platform turns its back on isolationism. Instead, political and religious idealism combined with humanitarianism have returned: Peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance in Haiti together with European allies, standing up for Israel and the Vatican that have been discriminated against by some European states, and raising concerns about anti-Semitic violence in Europe.

The tradition of cautious idealism has come to its end in the 2008 Republican party platform. Characteristics of isolationist skepticism can be detected. While there is no clear demand for isolationism, the lack of insistence for international activism is clear. The platform is concise about Europe. Most space is given to military force, in the form of praise for the expanded NATO alliance and the plans for building a new missile defense system in Europe. Some short mentions are given to political and religious idealism: democracy promotion through cultural diplomacy, and sympathy for Israel and Vatican who face discrimination from European states in the UN.

The 2012 Republican party platform takes a step back towards cautious idealism, but the scale still weighs more towards isolationist skepticism. Military force is the key

element of the platform, as the Republicans once again accuse the Democratic administration of ruining the military capacity of the US with their cuts and lack of investments into new weapons and missile defense systems in Europe. Unilateralism is strong in the platform: while the American memberships in international institutions such as the UN and NATO are recognized, the platform speaks out about how the US must not be bound to obey decisions made by others. Nationalism is evident in the claims about American military and economic superiority over Europe. Finally, political idealism appears shortly in relation to spreading democracy through cultural diplomacy, as well as in the skepticism about the state of democracy in Russia, and in the preparedness to use economic sanctions against Russia unless the situation improves.

Surprisingly, the 2016 Republican party platform is a clear-cut example of cautious idealism. There are plenty of elements that show the difference between the party platform written by party elites, and the public campaign of the presidential nominee Trump. The campaign's isolationist "America first" ideology is not reflected in the platform's new foreign policy outline that claims the protection of human rights globally should be in the center of all diplomatic and bilateral relations. Furthermore, the platform announces that the US is prepared to defend Eastern Europe against any kind of aggression from Russia, be it a military or hybrid threat. Besides, Ukraine is promised military assistance in the war against Russia. These elements of humanitarianism and political idealism were lacking in the campaign, where candidate Trump threatened not to commit to the collective defense of European allies dictated by NATO Article 5.

Nevertheless, the typical policy orientations of unilateralism and military force appear in the 2016 Republican party platform as well. The platform urges the US to withdraw from all potentially restricting international treaties such as climate treaties. In addition, the platform repeats the claim of the previous platform stressing that in international organizations the US must reserve the right to go their own way. What is more, the platform demands increased investments in military capacity to guarantee American superiority and security in forms of a modern nuclear stockpile and a missile defense system. Finally, the platform raises some softer policy issues as well, such as democracy promotion through cultural diplomacy, and religious idealism in the concern for the treatment of Christians in secular Europe.

6.3 How and Why Do Policies Towards Europe Differ between the Democrats and the Republicans?

The hypothesis of this thesis was that the parties will concentrate on slightly different issues, events, and actors when referring to Europe in their party platforms. The Democratic Party is more likely to highlight soft policy issues like social and environmental policy, whereas the Republican Party may focus more on hard policy like defense and military. Third, should the party platforms raise virtually similar issues, events, and actors, it is expected that because of their ideological differences, the two parties should have differing or even opposing moral evaluations about them and treatment recommendations for them.

6.3.1 Differences in Policy Areas

Differences in the policy areas exist between the two parties' platforms. However, the platforms are surprisingly alike: Defense and Military is the most common category for both parties, followed by Non-Military Security and Democracy. Contrary to the hypothesis, the Democratic party platforms have a larger share about Defense and Military policy than the Republican ones. A likely reason for that is the shorter length of the Democratic platforms: The Republican platforms had more space for detailed mentions about other policy areas.

Nonetheless, the hypothesis is in a way supported by the fact that the Republican party platforms were more positive about both Defense and Military policy, Non-Military Security policy, and Democracy policy than the Democratic platforms. The Republicans are more enthusiastic about a new missile defense system in Europe and about the NATO expansion in Eastern Europe. Moreover, the Republican party platforms since 2004 applaud those European countries that joined them in the War on Terror.

The biggest differences in policy areas between the two parties are in the category Economy, Trade, and Innovations and in the category Climate, Energy, and

Environment. These findings support the hypothesis: First, the Republican party platforms have a two times larger share of mentions about Economy than the Democratic ones. Second, the Democratic party platforms have a five times larger share of mentions about Climate than the Republican ones. What is more, in both policy areas, the Democratic party platforms are significantly more positive than the Republican ones.

In relation to Economy, Trade and Innovations, the Republican platforms see Europe as a rival and a bad example. They accuse Europe of protectionism and too large subsidies for their products, as well as for having too bureaucratic economies with heavy taxation. The Democrats, on the other hand, see Europe as a partner and are eager to improve trading relations with Russia, for example. In relation to Climate, Energy, and Environment, the Republicans blame the Soviet Union for ruining the environment in their geographical area and want to withdraw from international climate treaties such as the Paris Agreement. The Democrats, on the other hand, praise Europeans for being valuable partners in the fight against climate change and see Europe as something to look up to for instance regarding investments in green economy.

6.3.2 Differences in Geographical Regions

In addition to policy areas, there are variations in how different regions in Europe are seen in Democratic and Republican party platforms. In their book, Forsberg and Herd (2006) divide Europe in five blocks that have different kinds of relationships to the US. The “five Europes” are ‘Atlantic Europe’, ‘Core Europe’, ‘New Europe’, ‘Non-aligned Europe’, and ‘Periphery Europe’.

First, Forsberg and Herd (2006) argue that the US will have best relations to fellow NATO members in Atlantic and New Europe. They argue that Atlantic Europe has similar values to the US and traditional institutional ties to them, and that New Europe is dependent on American protection. Second, Forsberg and Herd predict that there will be continued disagreements between the US and Core Europe even though they too are NATO members. The scholars claim that the rift between the US and Core Europe that was caused by the dispute over the Iraq War was so significant that it will be hard to

repair. Moreover, they argue that because Core Europe does not depend on America in security or economy, they do not have such a strong interest in pleasing the US.

Third, relations between the US and Non-aligned Europe will not be focused on from the American side unless the European countries decide to join NATO. Finally, Forsberg and Herd (2006) argue that the relations to Periphery Europe and especially to Russia are likely to remain complex. There were signs of deepening cooperation between the US and Russia in the war against terrorism and in some other fields. However, the scholars predict that the superpower history of Russia can cause tensions and rivalry between the US and Russia also in the future.

The results of the analysis of the party platforms are somewhat surprising. Because of differences between the two parties' platforms, the results are to some degree contradictory to Forsberg and Herd's (2006) predictions. The most frequently mentioned regions in the party platforms are Russia and Periphery Europe for both parties. What comes to the closest allies, Atlantic Europe, and New Europe, they are much more often mentioned in the Republican party platforms. Finally, Core Europe and Non-aligned Europe are the least mentioned regions, but they appear more often in the Democratic party platforms.

First, as Forsberg and Herd (2006) predicted, the relationship with Russia is complex for both parties. In general, the Democratic party platforms are much more positive towards Russia, treating it mainly as a cooperation partner. The 2016 Democratic party platform is an exception that again sees Russia as a threat. On the other hand, the Republican party platforms treat Russia mainly as a bad example, then as a cooperation partner, and almost as often as a threat. Second, Periphery Europe receives equally negative attention from both parties. They both treat it mainly as a conflict zone or as an object of American military or economic aid.

Third, the biggest differences between the parties are in their relations to Atlantic Europe and New Europe. The differences appear mainly in how frequently the regions are mentioned in the platforms, not in the tones in how they are mentioned. Forsberg and Herd (2006) predicted that the US would have best relations to these two regions in Europe. However, this theory applies only to the Republican party. The Republican

party platforms mention Atlantic and New Europe almost twice as often as the Democratic party platforms. One explanation is the Eastern expansion of NATO, that the Republicans seem much more enthusiastic about than the Democrats. However, this gap widens mostly because of the Iraq War. The Republican party platforms praise these regions for being their best allies, whereas the Democratic party platforms remain critical towards the whole war.

Fourth, Forsberg and Herd (2006) predicted that the role of Core Europe would become less important to the US because of their breach over Iraq War. This certainly applies to the Republican party platforms, but not to the Democratic ones. In the Democratic party platforms, the long-standing allies in Core Europe receive more attention than the new, Eastern allies in New Europe. Finally, the Democratic party platforms devote more attention to Non-aligned Europe than the Republican party platforms. An explanation is that the Republican party platforms are more interested in military allies, whereas the Democratic party platforms see more value in other fields of cooperation.

6.3.3 Differences in Foreign Policy Ideologies

To summarize the comparison of the ideological dimensions, the post-Cold War era Democratic party platforms are rather unanimous in their foreign policy profile as forceful idealists. Being advocates for active foreign policy, isolationism is not a part of any of the Democratic platforms. Multilateralism, political idealism, and humanitarianism can be found in all of them. Nationalism is not among the strongest features in the Democratic platforms, but it appears there occasionally. Besides, the platforms have references to military force. It is the most significant feature that tips the scale from global citizenship to forceful idealism. Finally, religious idealism is another policy orientation typical for forceful idealism, but it is lacking from almost all Democratic platforms.

It is interesting how the intra-party ideology remains rather consistent throughout the Democratic party platforms, whereas there are such large differences in the intra-party ideologies between the Republican party platforms. The Republican party platforms are almost evenly divided between the foreign policy profiles Cautious Idealists and

Isolationist Skeptics. The 2016 Republican party platform provides the biggest surprise: based on the presidential nominee Trump's campaign, the platform should be a case in point of Isolationist Skepticism. However, the might of the party elites is reflected in the platform that ends up being a clear-cut showcase of Cautious Idealism. A significant distinction between those two categories is the preparedness for international activism, together with how much value the platform gives to protecting human rights.

When it comes to ideology, the Republican party platforms differ significantly from Democratic party platforms. Between the two parties, polarization in foreign policy exists in three main orientations: multilateralism, nationalism, and isolationism. In contrast to the Democratic party platforms, the Republican party platforms support American unilateralism and superiority in unmistakable ways throughout the platforms. Additionally, almost half of the Republican party platforms show signs of isolationism, which is a stark contrast to the Democratic party platforms. Finally, military force and religious idealism appear much more often in Republican than Democratic party platforms. Political idealism, in the form of promoting democracy and capitalism, is the only orientation that can be found in all party platforms, regardless of party or year.

7 Conclusion

In this thesis, the United States' Democratic and Republican party platforms of the post-Cold War era were analyzed to find variations in their policies towards Europe. This thesis provides a new perspective to transatlantic relations: the role of the parties. The 14 party platforms from seven presidential elections were chosen as the dataset because they are the most important documents that the political parties produce. There is only limited amount of research about the contents of the party platforms, and no previous research about the way Europe is addressed in them.

In conclusion, the findings of the analysis support the hypothesis that the policies towards Europe vary between and within the Democratic and Republican party platforms over time. Events in international politics, power struggles in domestic politics, as well as differences in ideological foundations play a role in policy shifts over time.

When it comes to the first hypothesis, that intra-party ideological policy shifts over time, this can be seen more clearly in the Republican party platforms. The Republican platforms display variation in foreign policy ideology between Cautious Idealism and Isolationist Skepticism. As a contrast, the Democratic party platforms showcase a rather balanced ideological foundation. Yet the events in international politics, especially the Balkan Wars, the Iraq War, and the Russian annexation of Crimea, have influenced policy shifts in both Democratic and Republican party platforms. In addition, power struggles in domestic politics, especially whether the party is incumbent or the challenger, have played a role in the policy shifts over time.

When it comes to the second hypothesis, that there are differences in the policies towards Europe between the two parties, the results are obvious. The Democratic and Republican party platforms are polarized in their policies towards Europe. As predicted, the parties concentrate on slightly different issues and actors when referring to Europe in their party platforms. The differences in actors are clear between the two parties. Surprisingly, military and non-military security policy appeared as often in both parties' platforms. However, the Democratic party highlights soft policy issues like climate

change more, whereas the Republican party focuses on economic policy. Most importantly, because of their ideological differences, the two parties have differing or even opposing moral evaluations of and treatment recommendations for the policies and the actors.

There are some limitations in the thesis. First, there are compatibility issues between the theoretical background and the data. The analysis was restricted by the angle provided by the research question, so no holistic overview of the whole dataset is given. In the thesis, the data was narrowed down only to those sentences that contained a reference to Europe. Not all of them were about foreign policy. Additionally, the theoretical background about foreign policy profiles could not be applied to all the foreign policy texts in the platforms. Hence the theory is not fully compatible with the data.

Second, the qualitative content analysis method would require checks to ensure reliability. Reliability means that the data should be coded by at least two different people or at two different points in time in order to provide objective results. Because the coding by another person was not possible in the context of a master's thesis, reliability was attempted to be achieved by going through the coding process more than once. However, the first round of coding was applied only to half of the dataset, so it accounted only for a pilot experiment. The second coding round was based on the results of the first round, but it changed the original coding scheme significantly. After the second round, a systematic check was conducted through the data and the codes applied to it once more. However, all the data was not coded from scratch during the third round. Therefore, the reliability requirement is not fulfilled completely.

Third, another requirement for the analysis is validity: that the method discovers everything it should from the data. In the thesis, validity is secured because the analysis was data-driven instead of concept-driven. The coding scheme was built mainly inductively after a thorough reading of the data. However, pure qualitative content analysis alone can only answer to the question *what* is said, not *how* it is said. Therefore, some more descriptive categories were added in the coding scheme so that the tones of the platforms could be better analyzed. Additionally, in order to better visualize the results, the results were quantified into percentages. However, quantifying

such a limited amount of data and drawing conclusions based on that may be somewhat problematic.

One could also ask why this analysis is significant. After all, the party platforms are ideological documents, the policies of which will rarely be realized as such in the real world. The foreign policy of the US is formed by the president and the congress together. Seldom does one party have both the presidency and a large enough majority in both chambers at the same time. Moreover, as the 2016 Republican party platform shows, the policies between the party platform and the presidential nominee of the party can be almost contradictory. In addition, unexpected events in the world could make good intentions in the platforms impossible. A case in point is the optimistic policy towards Russia in the 2012 Democratic party platform, and the 2014 Russian annexation of Crimea.

Nonetheless, this thesis provides interesting new information about the partisan perspective to transatlantic relations. It was proven by the thesis that party polarization does exist in foreign policy, and in the transatlantic relations as well. So far, the party platforms have been forgotten documents, but now they could provide a unique perspective into a thoroughly researched field in foreign policy. For a political scientist, this information is valuable as such.

Furthermore, Forsberg and Herd (2006) argue that in the post- 9/11 era, there are three possible developments for the future of transatlantic relations: strategic divorce, realignment, or dissonance. Strategic divorce would mean a permanent break-up between the US and Europe. Realignment would mean that the US and Europe find common ground and join forces over joint goals such as global security and prosperous economy. Forsberg and Herd support the third option, strategic dissonance. It means that transatlantic cooperation will continue in some sectors and with some European countries, whereas turbulence and even conflicts will prevail in the relations with other European countries.

The results of the thesis support the strategic dissonance theory. More specifically, the party platforms show that strategic dissonance can be found within the American political system. First, Democrats and Republicans have polarized views over

transatlantic relations. Second, especially within the Republican party, there is forceful fluctuation between different ideological factions. An idea for further research could be comparing the contents of the party platforms to the policy papers and speeches by presidential candidates in the primary and the general election campaigns. It would provide information about the influence of the different ideological factions within the parties. Another idea for future research is to compare the contents of the party platforms to the actions and policies of the incumbent administration. Are the party platforms compatible with real-world policies?

In conclusion, this thesis is very topical as we are in the presidential election year 2020. As far as we know today, the party platforms will be published in the Democratic and Republican National Conventions that are to take place in August 2020. This thesis revealed a curious trend: In the post-Cold War era, the presidential elections have always been won by the party that has a larger share of text about Europe in their party platform. It will be interesting to see if this causality relation continues in the presidential elections in November 2020.

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Appendices

The Coding Frame

Actor

Actor: Geographical location
Actor: NATO
Actor: Institutions other than NATO
Actor: Person

Event

Event: Cold War history
Event: Conflict in Europe
Event: Conflict outside of Europe
Event: Disarmament
Event: End of Cold War
Event: NATO enlargement
Event: Pre-Cold War history

Policy Area

Policy: Climate, energy, and environment
Policy: Defense and military
Policy: Democracy
Policy: Economy, trade, and innovations
Policy: Health and social
Policy: Non-military Security

Geography

Geo: Europe
Geo: Atlantic Europe
Great Britain, Northern Ireland, Portugal, Spain
Geo: Core Europe
France, Germany, Greece, Turkey
Geo: New Europe
Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, The
Baltic States
Geo: Non-aligned Europe
Ireland, Cyprus
Geo: Periphery Europe
Albania, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo,
Macedonia, Serbia, Ukraine, The Vatican State, Soviet Union
Geo: Russia
Russia, Soviet Union

Interpretation

Interpretation: Negative
Interpretation: Neutral
Interpretation: Positive

Role of the European actor

Role: Ally
Role: Bad example
Role: Conflict zone
Role: Cooperation
Role: Good example
Role: Losing importance
Role: Neutral
Role: Object of US aid
Role: Rival
Role: Threat

Tables

General Tones of the Party Platforms

Interpretation	Negative	Positive	Neutral	Totals
Dem-92	5	10	3	18
Dem-96	8	19	9	36
Dem-2000	4	13	6	23
Dem-2004	5	5	5	15
Dem-2008	6	9	6	21
Dem-2012	4	15	0	19
Dem-2016	14	10	0	24
Rep-92	10	20	8	38
Rep-96	25	8	5	38
Rep-2000	23	38	8	69
Rep-2004	7	39	5	51
Rep-2008	5	10	2	17
Rep-2012	16	9	1	26
Rep-2016	23	11	4	38

Policy Areas in the Party Platforms

	Democratic Party Platforms (of which positive)	Republican Party Platforms (of which positive)
Policy: Climate, Energy, and Environment	4.5% 7 (100%)	1.0% 3 (0%)
Policy: Defense and Military	54.2% 84 (46.4% 39/84)	47.6% 139 (51.1% 71/139)
Policy: Democracy	14.8% 23 (52.2% 12/23)	17.5% 51 (64.7% 33/51)
Policy: Economy, Trade, and Innovations	7.1% 11 (72.7% 8/11)	15.8% 46 (34.8% 16/46)
Policy: Health and Social	1.2% 2 (0%)	1.4% 4 (50%)
Policy: Non-Military Security	18.1% 28 (35.7% 10/28)	16.8% 49 (40.8% 20/49)
Totals	155	292

Actors in the Party Platforms

	Democratic Party Platforms	Republican Party Platforms
Actor: Geographical location	73.2% 123	78.3% 235
Actor: Institution other than NATO	6.6% 11	7.3% 22
Actor: NATO	17.9% 30	12.7% 38
Actor: Person	2.4% 4	1.7% 5
Totals	168	300

Geographical Regions in the Party Platforms

	Democratic Party Platforms	Republican Party Platforms
Europe	25.2% 37	20.1% 56
Atlantic Europe	8.9% 13	12.2% 34
Core Europe	6.8% 10	6.1% 17
New Europe	6.1% 9	11.8% 33
Non-aligned Europe	5.4% 8	3.9% 11
Periphery Europe	16.3% 24	14.0% 39
Russia	31.3% 46	31.9% 89
Totals (N)	N=147	N=279

Roles of European Actors in the Party Platforms

	Democratic Party Platforms	Republican Party Platforms
Role: Ally	21.5% 35	15.1% 42
Role: Bad example	11.7% 19	15.8% 44
Role: Conflict zone	15.3% 25	10.4% 29
Role: Cooperation partner	22.1% 36	22.3% 62
Role: Good example	4.3% 7	8.3% 23
Role: Neutral	1.8% 3	5.4% 15
Role: Object of declining importance	1.2% 2	2.2% 6
Role: Object of US aid	13.5% 22	9.7% 27
Role: Rival	1.2% 2	2.5% 7
Role: Threat	7.4% 12	8.3% 23
Totals	163	278

Roles of the Institutions in the Party Platforms

	Actor: Institutions other than NATO		Actor: NATO	
	Democratic Party Platforms	Republican Party Platforms	Democratic Party Platforms	Republican Party Platforms
Role: Ally	0	0	74.2% 23	56.4% 22
Role: Bad example	0	4.5% 1	9.7% 3	5.1% 2
Role: Cooperation partner	54.5% 6	59.1% 13	6.5% 2	30.8% 12
Role: Good example	18.2% 2	9.1% 2	0	2.6% 1
Role: Neutral	9.1% 1	4.5% 1	0	0
Role: Object of declining importance	0	0	3.2% 1	5.1% 2
Role: Object of US aid	18.2% 2	0	6.5% 2	0
Role: Rival	0	22.7% 5	0	0
Totals	11	22	31	39

Roles of Russia in the Party Platforms

	Democratic Party Platforms	Republican Party Platforms
Russia as ally	2.1% 1	1.1% 1
Russia as bad example	19.2% 9	26.3% 25
Russia as conflict zone	0.0%	2.1% 2
Russia as cooperation partner	42.6% 20	26.3% 25
Russia as good example	2.1% 1	5.3% 5
Russia as object of declining importance	0.0%	0

Russia as neutral	0.0%	6.3% 6
Russia as object of US aid	6.4% 3	7.4% 7
Russia as rival	2.1% 1	2.1% 2
Russia as threat	25.5% 12	23.2% 22
Totals (N)	N=47	N=95

Roles of Europe in General in the Party Platforms

	Democratic Party Platforms	Republican Party Platforms
Europe as ally	41.0% 16	13.8% 8
Europe as bad example	10.3% 4	20.7% 12
Europe as conflict zone	0.0%	1.7% 1
Europe as cooperation partner	25.6% 10	24.1% 14
Europe as good example	5.1% 2	3.5% 2
Europe as object of declining importance	2.6% 1	6.9% 4
Europe as neutral	0.0%	5.2% 3
Europe as object of US aid	12.8% 5	17.2% 10
Europe as rival	2.6% 1	6.9% 4
Europe as threat	0.0%	0.0%
Totals (N)	N=39	N=58

Events in the Party Platforms

	Democratic Party Platforms	Republican Party Platforms
Event: Cold War history	2.1% 2	4.1% 6
Event: Conflict in Europe	40.6% 39	33.3% 49
Event: Conflict outside of Europe	21.9% 21	25.2% 37
Event: Disarmament	13.5% 13	15.7% 23
Event: End of Cold War	12.5% 12	10.2% 15
Event: NATO enlargement	8.3% 8	8.8% 13
Event: Pre-Cold War history	1.0% 1	2.7% 4
Totals	96	147